श्री राम जयं
श्री ॐ श्रीनिवास परब्रह्मणे नमः
शुक्लाम्बरधरं विष्णुं शशिवर्णं चतुर्भुजं
प्रसन्नवदनम् ध्यायेत्सर्वविघ्नोपशान्तये
श्रीमते हयग्रीवाय नमः

Yoga Makaranda

or

Yoga Saram

(The Essence of Yoga)

First Part

Sri T. Krishnamacharya
Mysore Samasthan Acharya
(Written in Kannada)

Tamil Translation by Sri C.M.V. Krishnamacharya
(with the assistance of Sri S. Ranganathadesikacharya)

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Translators' Note

This is a translation of the Tamil Edition of Sri T. Krishnamacharya's *Yoga Makaranda*. Every attempt has been made to correctly render the content and style of the original. Any errors detected should be attributed to the translators. A few formatting changes have been made in order to facilitate the ease of reading. A list of asanas and a partial glossary of terms left untranslated has been included at the end.

We would like to thank our teacher Sri T. K. V. Desikachar who has had an inestimable influence upon our study of yoga. We are especially grateful to Roopa Hari and T.M. Mukundan for their assistance in the translation, their careful editing, and valuable suggestions. We would like to thank Saravanakumar (of ECOTONE) for his work reproducing and restoring the original pictures. Several other people contributed to this project and we are grateful for their efforts.

There are no words sufficient to describe the greatness of Sri T. Krishnamacharya. We began this endeavour in order to better understand his teachings and feel blessed to have had this opportunity to study his words. We hope that whoever happens upon this book can find the same inspiration that we have drawn from it.

Lakshmi Ranganathan
Nandini Ranganathan

October 15, 2006

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Sri Hayagrivaya Namaha
सविनय प्रार्थनांजलि मुद्रापूर्वक समर्पणे

The Lord of the auspicious Karnataka throne, one who shines with many titles such as auspicious king etc., one who rules us with unbounded and extraordinary affection and love without any expectation, the Lord and Emperor, the fourth Sri Krishna Rajendra with his sacred command — in order to serve him eternally, I humbly offer this work.

This text contains the essential concepts from many texts of antiquity listed below.

I have studied the texts listed below under the blessing of a great teacher and have explained the truths contained in them that I have personally experienced.

I request that the Lord of the auspicious Karnataka throne, the great Lord and Emperor, the fourth Sri Krishna Rajendra, accept this work and allow my humble self to fulfil my endeavor and bless me.

More than this, I have nothing to say in this preface.

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8. Yoga Ratnakarandam
9. Mano Narayaneeyam
10. Rudrayameelam (Rudrayamalam)
11. Brahmayameelam
12. Atharvana Rahasyam

13. Patanjala Yogadarshanam
14. Kapilasutram
15. Yogayajnavalkyam
16. Gheranda Samhita
17. Narada Pancharatra Samhita
18. Satvata Samhita
19. Siva Samhita
20. Dhyana Bindu Upanishad
21. Chandilya Upanishad
22. Yoga Shika Upanishad
23. Yoga Kundalya Upanishad
24. Ahir Buddhniya Samhita
25. Nada Bindu Upanishad
26. Amrita Bindu Upanishad
27. Garbha Upanishad

Year of Bava
the Month of Aipasi, Wednesday, Swati
10-10-1934

In the service of the fourth
Lord and Emperor Krishna Rajendra
T. Krishnamacharya
Mysore

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Why should Yogabhyasa be done

Why should *yoga abhyasa* be done? What does one gain as a result of practising yoga? What should the duration of the practice be (how much time should be spent on the practice)? What are the reasons for and effects of the practice? People keep asking me these questions. Others ask me various questions related to this subject. I have written this book in order to answer their questions.

But before doing that I would like to say a few words. Nowadays, the attitudes of people in our society are changing. They look at all their affairs as business ventures and think only in terms of making a profit or loss. This outlook is on the increase. This attitude is becoming an obstacle to our spiritual progress. It is pathetic and sad that this instant gross business-oriented attitude meant to be applied during transactions with a road-side vendor has been applied to even matters involving *sanatana dharma* and spiritual truths.

One cannot have such a trivial attitude as expecting immediate benefits in auspicious matters like *yogabhyasa*, worship, *sandhya vandanam* (salutation to the sun) or chanting of mantras as though one were a labourer who does one hour of work and expects immediate payment. They should not lament that they have not received even one paisa for all the time spent on this. When this pattern of thinking begins, we enter a phase of deterioration day by day.

Auspicious matters such as *yogabhyasa* are not like business ventures conducted at a road-side shop. The readers should note this point carefully. They should reflect on how much we get paid for all the time that we waste every day. For example, how much time have we wasted on sleep or useless chatter or other such activities? All living beings including humans spend a minimum of 6 to

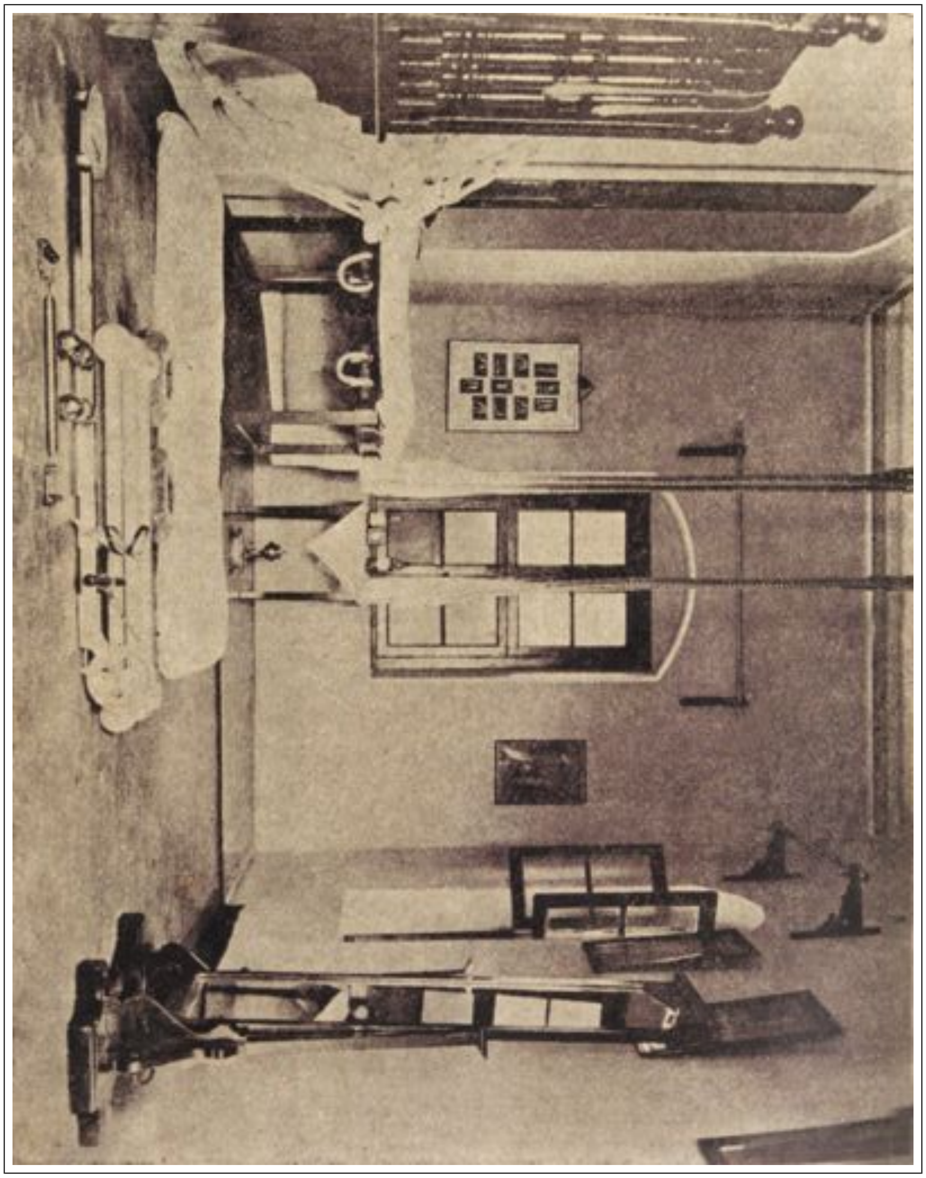


Figure 1.1: Yogasala



Figure 1.2: Yogabhyasis at the Yogasala



Figure 1.3: Students at the Yogasala

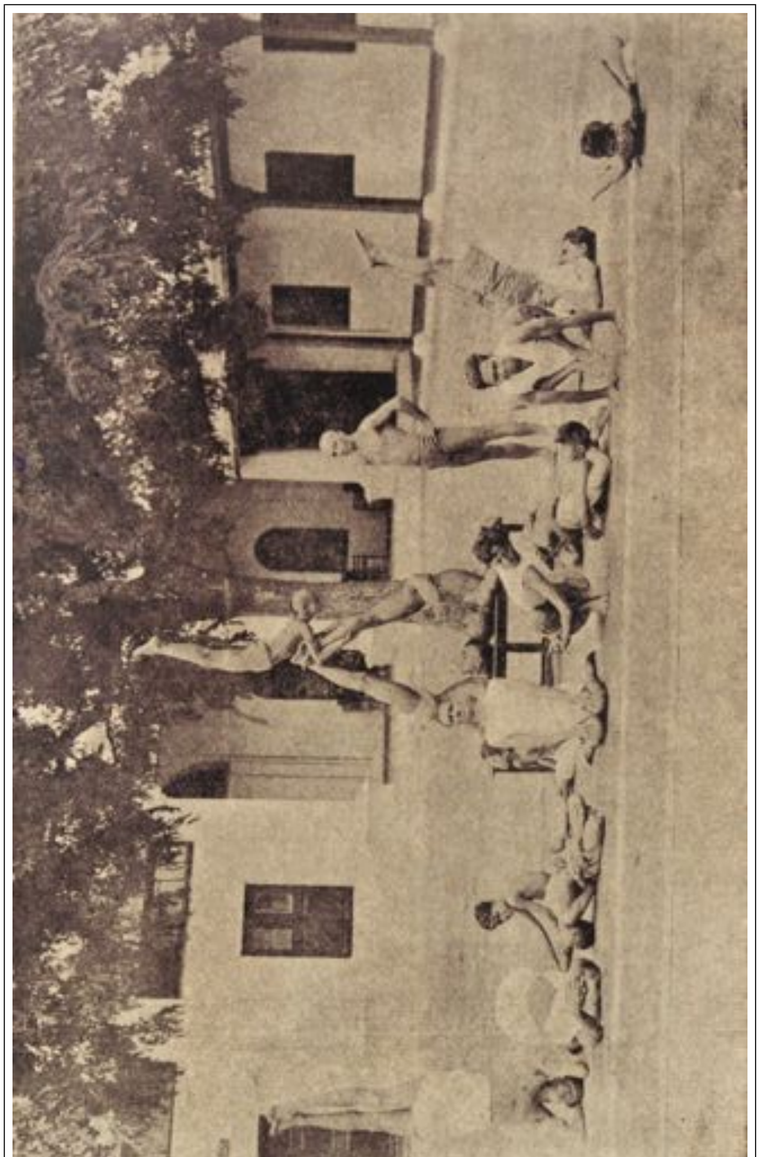


Figure 1.4: Students at the Yogasala

7 hours on sleep. Does anybody think that they have wasted too many hours on this pointless or unprofitable sleep and decide that henceforth they will not sleep? Never. The reason is that if this time is not spent daily on sleep without expectations of remuneration, the body will perish. Maybe one can forego five to six days of sleep. Even this causes the head to start reeling. After that, one has no energy to do anything. Therefore, everybody knows with certainty and from experience that all living beings need a specified amount of sleep irrespective of whether they obtain any material benefit from it. Physical health, enthusiasm and liveliness are all benefits of sleep. Not only that, it is not an exaggeration to say that our body and mind are rejuvenated as a result of sleep.

How does sleep acquire this power of rendering so many benefits? Where did this come from? Why is it that without sufficient sleep living beings become dull in their mind, the body heats up, and they develop a dullness of intellect, a lack of enthusiasm, and weakness? It is important to first explain this aspect in detail to readers. The answers to this will clear many doubts the readers have. Through these explanations, the earlier questions will also be answered properly.

When the activities of the mind stop, one can sleep well. Otherwise, there will be no sleep. Nobody has ever had the experience of having the mind be simultaneously active in one part and asleep in another. When all movements of the mind reduce, when thoughts such as “I”, “mine”, “my greatness”, cease, and when all the affairs of the mind stop, only then is proper sleep possible. Only such a sleep gives a sense of well-being to the body and mind. If even some minute thought or mental activity persists, the sleep will be mixed with dreams. Such a sleep (with dreams) will not contribute towards the well-being of the body or mind. Everybody knows that such a proper sleep occurs only when the mind remains still in a single state and various mental activities like action-oriented thoughts, fluctuations of thought, dream, and imagination cease. When such activities of the mind cease, good sleep becomes possible. Hence sleep is a complete cessation of all activities of mind. From this we realize that all the benefits we gain as a result of sleep are due to the quietude of the mind. When the thoughts and the mind wander here and there, there will be no sleep. This leads one to feel as though one is going mad.

In the *jagrata avastha*, the mind wanders here and there. Due to this, every living being gets involved in every activity that it encounters, the mind remains in states of sorrow and pleasure and as a consequence becomes weary and exhausted. As a result, once in awhile, the mind tries to escape and go away in order to seek rest, somehow tries to find peace and a remedy for exertion, and tries to sleep. We all know that such sleep (following exhaustion) will definitely rejuvenate the

mind and remove the tiredness. Therefore there is no doubt that a deep sleep will be able to remove any weariness faced by the mind. What this teaches us is that only when there is no agitation or confusion of the mind, good qualities like enthusiasm, good health, knowledge, sharp memory, agility, contentment and affection towards others will develop in a person. Instead of that, if the mind gets disturbed, negative qualities like tiredness, lack of enthusiasm and laziness will arise and lead a person to sorrow. This is why every lifeform goes to sleep every day and gets refreshed. This also expels physical exhaustion and tiredness. Moreover, it can be stated clearly that one who has not had proper sleep for some time is closer to death. All activities of the mind must cease if one is to sleep properly.

Now let us look into the questions discussed earlier.

The philosophy of yoga is to withdraw the mind from external activities, to draw its focus inwards, and to bring it into deep concentration. The benefit of such a process has been explained above using the example of sleep. The resolution of mind acquired from sleep is of a *tamasic* nature. But the quality of mind (concentration, strength) acquired from *yoga sadhana* is of a pure *sattva guna*. That is the difference between the two. It goes without saying that the mental strength acquired through a base of *sattva guna* is superior to that acquired through a base of *tamasic* nature. Whatever health, strength and happiness is acquired through normal sleep is exceeded more than 1000 times over by the strength, health and happiness acquired from the mental strength one develops through the practice of yoga. Ordinary people will not understand this. The mental concentration and strength acquired through *yogabhyasa* is called *yoga nidra* and ordinary mental resting which is *tamasic* in nature and is acquired as a result of physical exhaustion is called ordinary *nidra*.

After all the activities and movements of the mind cease, the mind which has become predominantly *sattvic* in nature becomes steady. Until it develops this steadiness, we do not obtain any benefits from it. Until the mind is made to remain steady, all the time spent on this pursuit will be wasted and we will not receive any benefits from actions performed by a shaky mind. As a result, some might ask, if spending time on yoga might not initially produce any benefit then why should one practise it? This question seems justified, but it must be said that such questions are asked only by those who have not thought deeply about the subject. "No accomplishment or achievement is possible without effort" is a great saying. Normally, if a man in search of profits ventures into the relevant activity without following the proper guidelines and asks "What can be gained as a result of this? Who knows whether I will or will not gain anything" and

is quite doubtful about achieving positive results, he will not achieve anything. But if he makes the effort to practise by following the correct path, he will not be deprived of the fruits of his practice. For example, let us take the fields of education and agriculture. Just as one reaps the benefits in these fields only after a period of time, so it is in the case of *yogabhyasa* practised with *krama* (following the regular order). Only after practising according to *krama* for a period of time will the *yogabhyasi* gain strength of body, good health and happiness, and the mind will mainly reside in *sattvaguna*. One more example — consider the case of a mango tree. Let us assume that there are plenty of fruits in it. Let us also assume that the owners of the tree have given us permission to pluck and eat the fruits. Yet with all this, if we did not move from our present place, or even if we did move, supposing we didn't go to the location of the mango tree, or supposing that we did go but did not make an effort to climb it, or supposing that we did climb the tree, but did not reach out to pluck the mango, or supposing that we did reach out, but that we did not bother to pluck the fruit, or even if we plucked the fruit, if we did not bother to taste its juice — without consuming the juice of the divine nectar, how can we know the taste of the fruit? This is never possible. The pleasure of tasting the fruit far exceeds that of climbing the tree or plucking the fruit. There is no need to emphasize this. Yet what can we say about one who, on reaching the tree, without even plucking the fruit, immediately laments that he has not tasted mangoes and refuses to go back to the tree? Without effort can anybody ever achieve anything? Similarly, even in the matter of yoga, unless it is practised with complete faith, no benefit will be gained. In any endeavour, there should be a totally dedicated effort until the completion of the action in order to achieve the benefits of the action. Likewise, there is no doubt that until *yogabhyasa* is done with the same attitude, practised every day at the same prescribed time and place, one will not obtain the expected benefits of the action.

Just as in order to climb the Tirupati hill one has to climb step by step and only at the end does one achieve *darsanam* of the *swami* and experience happiness, similarly everyone who follows the path of *yoga sastra* has to climb the eight steps of *yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana*, and *samadhi* proceeding according to the given order. Whoever climbs these eight steps proceeding according to the regular order will experience bliss.

Sometimes, in other activities, one has to wait until the end to experience the benefits of the action. This is not so in *yogabhyasa*. There are benefits at every stage of the practice. From practising only ***asana***, one gains strength of the body; from the practice of only the ***yama***, one develops compassion towards all

living beings; from practising only ***pranayama***, it is possible to achieve long life and good health. These words are elaborated upon in the relevant sections. Let me summarize them succinctly: if one follows *ahimsa, satya, astheya, aparigraha*, and *brahmacharya* systematically without fail, one develops a relationship of affection and compassion not just for other people but equally for all living beings. This attitude of perceiving all living beings with total impartiality (equality) is essential for the welfare of society.

The five ***niyama*** are *sauca*, *santosha*, *tapas*, *svadhyaya*, and *isvara pranidhana*. If one follows them as *krama*, then riots, anger, hatred and aversion will become illusory and will slowly disappear from society. When such attitudes disappear from society, we develop purity both internally and in our environments which leads to reforms without any obstacles and to the growth of the highest constant state of peace and tranquility.

Is there anybody who does not wish to be in a state of peace and societal fortitude. These two issues are essential for families to live in a state of contentment. Nowadays (in the present), these two factors are lacking. This has led to quarrels and discord between father and son, ruler and subject, husband and wife which in turn has resulted in an inferior state of life. Hence the first two steps in the path of *yogabhyasa*, *yama* and *niyama*, must be followed by everybody.

Asana practice renders correct blood circulation. The *snayu*s (ligaments) and various parts of the body will function at the perfect, ultimate level. It also causes all types??? of internal circulation to function properly. We all know the connection between good blood circulation, good *nadi granthi*, healthy body and good health. Hence it is not necessary to further emphasize the benefits of practising *asana* daily for at least a few minutes. What more does one need after seeing this? Only after acquiring these benefits can one expect to look forward to others.

Because of the power of *pranayama* practice, one develops strength in the bones, the bone marrow and the heart; one develops the brain, the head, the *anna kosam*, the fat layer, the *mana kosam*, the strength of breath and *prana*, and longevity; it sharpens the senses, strengthens the intellect and the voice and purifies the blood. All these are important factors necessary for the maintenance of health. Those with strong bones, vitality, nerves, and tendons will lead a healthy long life. Lack or weakness of *viryam* leads to lack of strength which leads to the atrophy of bones. Such a condition leads one to suffer from tuberculosis. Whoever has no impurities in their blood will never develop any disease, and their body will develop a kind of glow. How can darkness reside where there is sunlight? Hence all Ayurveda texts speak specifically on the importance of

good blood circulation and bone strength for good health. If the blood is not clean, then the *nadi cakras* will not function (rotate) properly. We have observed the wheels of trains, electrical gadgets and such machines. If even one wheel malfunctions, all the activities of the machine stop and the gadget breaks down. Similarly when any one of the *nadi cakras* contained in the machine that is the body malfunctions or is spoiled, we will not derive any of the benefits of good health. Hence good blood circulation is essential for the proper functioning of the *nadi cakras*.

1.2 Cakras

In the machine that is our body, there are ten *cakras* — namely 1. *muladhara cakra*, 2. *svadhishtana cakra*, 3. *manipuraka cakra*, 4. *surya cakra*, 5. *manas cakra*, 6. *anahata cakra*, 7. *visuddhi cakra*, 8. *ajña cakra*, 9. *sahasrara cakra*, 10. *brahmaguha (lalata) cakra*.

1. **Muladhara Cakra**

   This cakra is next to the rectum. If, due to the strength resulting from practising *pranayama* with a focus on this *cakra*, *caitanya* is attained in this *cakra*, then this will strengthen the *viryam* (sexual vitality). When the *viryam* is kept under control, the body becomes tough. If anybody acquires *caitanya* in this *cakra*, they will become virile.

2. **Svadhishthana Cakra**

   This *svadhishthana cakra* lies two *angulas* above the *muladhara* cakra. If by doing *pranayama abhyasa* according to the *krama* and rules *caitanya* is attained in this *cakra*, then this will destroy all diseases. There will be an astounding increase in good health. Any amount of physical work can be done without any fatigue. Even enemies will admire and adore one who has *caitanya* in this *cakra*. Violence will run away and hide from him. Even a tiger and cow will live in peaceful coexistence in his presence.

3. **Manipuraka Cakra**

   This is situated exactly in the navel. If, due to the strength of *pranayama* practice, *caitanya* is attained in this *cakra*, then the practitioner will never encounter any physical or mental afflictions. These afflictions will flee his presence. One who has acquired *caitanya* in this *cakra* will be able to

face any disaster or accident with mental fortitude. Not only that, he will develop *divya drishti*. He will experience the bliss of identifying *atman* as a separate entity from the body. This *cakra* is situated in the middle of all other *cakras*. The main function of this *cakra* is to ensure that all organs or parts of the body function at their proper strength. Good health is possible only when all the organs are strong. Any disease in any organ indicates ill health.

4. **Surya Cakra**

   This *cakra* is situated in the third *angula* above the navel. *Pranayama* practised with an equal ratio of exhalation and inhalation (*recaka* and *puraka*) with a focus on this *cakra* gives rise to *caitanya* in this *cakra*. *Caitanya* in this *cakra* purifies all the *nadis* of the stomach. One who has acquired *caitanya* in this *cakra* will not suffer from any diseases of the stomach, nor from any *mahodaram* and will acquire eternal good health, amazing vitality or shine, and long life. The *pranayama* practitioner will attain free movement of this *cakra* which will be visible by rapid increase in the digestive power. Special *caitanya* or insight will develop on practising *bastra kevala kumbhaka pranayama*. This is not possible to attain from practising other types of *pranayama* with a focus on this *cakra*. These will just lead to the ordinary benefits.

5. **Manas Cakra**

   This is close to the *anna kosam*. *Caitanya* in this *cakra* is attained by a sustained practice of *kevala kumbhaka pranayama*. The main function of this *cakra* is to increase the power of intuition and to expand the intellect. This is because practising *kumbhaka pranayama* purifies (cleanses) the brain. There is a special connection between the brain and the *manas cakra*.

6. **Anahata Cakra**

   This is situated in the *hrdaya* (heart) *sthana*. There is a special connection between this and the heart. *Pranayama abhyasa* with *recaka* and *puraka kumbhaka* of different ratios (raising and lowering the ratios) with a focus on this *cakra* will give rise to a steady state of *caitanya* in this *cakra*. This state of *caitanya* in this *cakra* removes weakness of the heart and will give extraordinary strength. All the activities associated with the heart are carried out due to the strength of this *cakra*. We all know that in this

world, life is possible only as a result of the strength of the functioning of the heart. Hence if this *cakra* is kept in a correct state and moves freely, emotions like affection, devotion, *gñanam*, etc. — such superior states of mind (*bhavas*) will arise in the heart. If this *cakra* malfunctions or becomes impure and moves in a constricted fashion, then murder, theft, adultery, unchastity and other such inferior emotions will arise in the heart. By correct *pranayama* practice, the speed of the *cakra* increases and this gives rise to an expanded intellect and the person will be inspired to become more involved in good works. Any *pranayama* practised against *sastra* will weaken the movement and speed of the *cakra* and will destroy or weaken the heart.

7. **Visuddhi Cakra**

This is situated in the throat region. That is, it is situated in the region below the neck, above the sternum, in between the two bones where there is a soft area (gap) the size of the middle finger. If *caitanya* is achieved and held in this *cakra* due to the strength of *pranayama*, the practitioner gets *svara vigñanam* (knowledge of sound). If *cittam* can be controlled to focus on this *cakra*, the practitioner will lose all thoughts of this world (lose consciousness) and will be able to see the divine *paramatma* in all his glory through the light of the self. If one controls the movements of the *citta* and attains *caitanya* in this *cakra* through the strength of *kumbhaka*, he will attain a steady state of youth and enthusiasm. By achieving this *caitanya* through *krama*, these benefits can be experienced to the extent desired.

8. **Ajña Cakra**

This *cakra* is situated between the two eyebrows. If *caitanya* can be held (focussed) here, one acquires the power to control everybody. Through the movements of *recaka* and *puraka* in the *nadis* of the two nostrils, if one practises *pranayama* by keeping the breath in the nostrils and circulating and moving the *prana vayu*, then the *nadis* below the nostril get purified. One develops a divine lustre, one is able to see the *atman* and through this blessing will be able to see all the events that are occurring around the world without moving from their position. *Caitanya citta vritti* in the *ajña cakra* is extremely helpful for a long life.

9. **Sahasrara Cakra**

This is directly above the throat or palate. The greatness of this *cakra* is

beyond description. Every part of the body is associated to (depends on) this important point. If one enhances the *caitanya* in this *sahasrara cakra* through the strength of practising *puraka* in complete *pranayama abhyasa*, this will result in the rapid movement of this *cakra* which will in turn give any skill or power that you wish for.

10. **Brahmaguha (Lalata) Cakra**

    This *cakra* is situated above the forehead. *Pranayama* practice will cause the *prana vayu* to move through the *susumna nadi* and this *prana vayu* should be held here through the skill of *kumbhaka*. If such a practice is followed, one acquires the power to change one's own destiny. One cannot describe the greatness of this procedure. It can only be learned through experience.

The *caitanya sakti* in every *cakra* can be only achieved through the strength of the practice of *pranayama*. Once the *caitanya sakti* is attained, the movement of the *cakra* becomes great. At this time, one begins to immediately experience the many benefits mentioned earlier. If *pranayama* is practised under proper guidance for one or two years following the *sastras*, *cakra sakti* will blossom and the many benefits will be attained. But this *pranayama* must only be practised along with *asana* and while observing the *yama* and *niyama*. If practised in this way, the *pranayama sakti* will blossom and move in all the important regions of the body and in the ten *cakras* and give great strength and benefits. One who is not skilled in the *yama*, *niyama* and *asana* will not receive any benefits. By correct practice and effort, the *cakra sakti* expands and all the mentioned benefits are attainable.

1.3 Pratyahara

Pratyahara means to bring the *indriyas* under control and to keep them from wandering as they wish.

With constant, sustained practice, one can keep all the *indriyas* under one's control. To control the *indriyas* like this, it is essential to have a particular special strength or skill. It is very easy to acquire this *sakti*. Yet it may be a struggle for some to get this. This power is attained by restraining the senses. One who does not practise *pratyahara* and lets the *indriyas* wander as they wish making no effort to bring them under his control will become weak and his body's strength will reduce. He will have a wavering and confused mind, a shortened life and an

early death. Hence everybody should practise *pratyahara* and acquire this *sakti* to bring the senses under their control.

1.4 Dharana and Dhyana

To stop the mind and hold it in its proper place is called ***dharana***. This is an essential (very important) step in order to achieve *ekagrata* (one-pointedness) of the mind. One who is able to bring his mind to *ekagrata* will not only have all the senses under his command but will have all the *siddhis* in his hand. When the mind gets controlled, the *indriyas* become internalized and will perform their activities from inside. Hence by controlling the mind, all the *indriyas* will come under one's control.

There is a unique special aspect to ***dhyana***. That is, suppose one practises *pranayama, pratyahara* and *dharana* to control the mind and is able to acquire a state of *ekagrata* or focus the mind in one direction. Such a person, if he thinks about some situation or matter and wishes that it should or should not occur, events will happen according to his wishes. No one can say that such a thing is impossible or cannot occur. This was spoken of by the rishis as uttering a curse or a boon or blessing. Since we do not practise *yogabhyasa* anymore, we no longer have any faith in all this. But by observing the *yama* and *niyama* and practising *asana*, the ten *cakras* will attain their proper power, *caitanya sakti* will be attained by the practitioner in all ten *cakras* and the mind will become focussed and one-pointed. If he then practises *nididhyasanam* (profound and constant meditation), he attains the power to bestow any curse or boon. Moreover, he develops the power to attain whatever form he thinks about.

Hence, as one progresses in *yogabhyasa*, climbing up step by step, one observes the many visible benefits that are continuously obtained. Therefore, when we hear people who doubt the benefit of *yogabhyasa* (the people who ask what the point of *yogabhyasa* is), we realize that these are the words of the ignorant and not the words of the wise. We recognize that *yogabhyasa* followed according to *sastra* will never be a waste. As much correct effort and dedication that is put into the practice, there will be correspondingly as much benefit. With two to three hours of daily practice following all the rules and restrictions, one begins to see appropriate benefits well within a year. That is, through the blossoming of the power of both the body and mind, one obtains *sakti* and bliss. Among the 64 *vidyas* only yoga *vidya* gives visible benefits and no other.

But those who don't follow their *sanatana dharma*, straying from their path

and violating rules of diet and action, these people will not receive proper benefits from *yogabhyasa*; they will receive only very few benefits with great difficulty. But the readers should not think that these losses and difficulties are a result of *yogabhyasa*. Suppose that a doctor prescribes the correct medicine to an ill patient and also prescribes dietary restrictions for curing the disease. If the patient violates the diet and eats as he pleases, he will strengthen the disease and will suffer as a result. Just ponder carefully who is at fault: the doctor or the medicine or the mistakes of the patient. Similarly, in the matter of *yogabhyasa*, the practitioner who ignores the restrictions and rules laid down by the great yogis will go through difficulties and encounter losses and negative results. This is not the fault of yoga. Normally even in worldly affairs (like business, politics, handwork, physical labour), when one exceeds one's limit, one undergoes hurdles, losses and difficulties, so you can imagine what will happen in yoga. One who practises yoga as prescribed by the rules will no doubt receive all the many benefits of practice.

Everybody should try and make every effort to study that which leads to *atma gñanam* and *prapanca gñanam*. That is the only knowledge one should pursue and attempt to acquire in a dedicated manner. It is a waste of time and effort to struggle with any other matter. Only the *Yoga sastra* and nothing else will clearly explain and illuminate the form, qualities and nature of *atma gñanam* and *prapanca gñanam*. Therefore everybody should learn, practise and experience the secrets of yoga.

Some argue that through the path of *gñanam*, one can attain *atma darshanam*, liberation and *prapanca sukham* (peaceful mind) and so debate as to why anybody would want to follow the path of *yoga sastra*. Let us answer this superior question in a proper way. It is true that one can destroy an enemy with a knife. But in order to fight a war and to vanquish the enemy in the battlefield with valour you have to be a very strong warrior; the knife alone in the hands of a weak warrior will not result in victory. Similarly, only through the strength and self-confidence attained from yoga will one experience the real happiness of *gñanam*. Without this, there will be no such happiness. Furthermore, only the strength of *yoga* can be called *gñanam* and nothing else. There is no *gñanam* separate from yoga. It is wrong to even associate anything else to *gñanam*.

> "Attainment of the four qualities* is called *gñanam*
> Who can attain *gñanam* without these qualities
> He may quote facts (book knowledge) but attains only ignorance
> The experience of *yoga sadhana* is necessary for this."

*(The four qualities are discrimination, detachment, inner wealth, and desire for liberation.)

This is a great authoritative statement on the doctrine of *gñanam*. Our ancients, the great rishis, followers of their *sanatana dharma* from the beginning of time, became experts in *yama*, *niyama*, *asana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara*, *dharana*, *dhyana*, and *samadhi*, stopped all external movements of the mind, and through the path of *raja yoga* attained a high state of happiness in this world and beyond. And they continue until this day to experience this. But during ancient times, all were skilled yoga practitioners and therefore had good health and strength, were blessed with a long life and were able to serve society. But just as due to bad association one acquires wrong *gunas*, nowadays due to bad influences people have slipped from the path of *sanatana dharma* and yoga and are perpetually sick, age quickly, have a short life-span, have become precocious and, shamefully, lead a selfish life. Sometimes, very rarely, like a rare flower, there are people who have knowledge of yoga and practise yoga with faith, ignoring the losses and difficulties that they suffer. Through teaching yoga, they improve the quality of life in the world. Their appearance is like a genuine diamond among imitation ones, and so they do not get noticed or recognized for their talent.

Leaving aside the affairs of our country India, let us consider the question regarding foreigners. They do not practise yoga, yet you might ask do they not have good health and are they not strong? Healthy and robust and mentally alert, one might ask are they not happy and content? But look, God has created India and according to its nature, soil, food and climate has devised appropriate work, art, skills, alertness and mental ability. Similarly, for people in every nation, he has created various sorts of food, work, etc, appropriate things based on their needs. I do not have to explain this to modern people who have travelled abroad: that the diet, body structure, form, beauty, walk, clothing all differ in different countries. Yet the health, body strength and strong mind one acquires through yoga is different from what one obtains merely by virtue of where one resides. The former gives divine knowledge as well as *atma gñanam* along with the knowledge of worldly affairs. The latter gives only knowledge of worldly affairs and that which is required for worldly existence. But we cannot say that people outside India are practising *yogabhyasa* and not just some form of physical exercise. I don't know about their practice earlier, but their practice nowadays may resemble or be based on *yogabhayasa* as noted by people who go abroad.

Hence the mind, when it is supported by the effort and achievement of yoga, has the capability to acquire the clarity of pristine knowledge. Just the practice of *sastras* (rituals) and *tarkam* (debates) that follow the *sastric* skills will not

give you the achievements of yoga. *Abhyasa* is the only method through which one gets *yoga sadhana*. Let the readers note the three parts: listening (hearing), inference or intuition, and experience is the method expounded in the sastras.

> "The vedas say that true knowledge can only reveal itself to you
> you cannot reach that state through just reading and studying"

The reader must reflect on this great aphorism. Hence, it is important to understand that *yoga sadhana* is essential for us all.

1.5 Who has the Authority to practise Yoga

"Arjuna, one who practises *yogabhyasa* following *yama* and *niyama* is a superior *atma* to those who are *tapasvi, gñani* and those who practise *nitya naimitya kaamya karma* etc. Hence you should follow the *yama* and *niyama* and conquer your mind and become a yogi."

Thus advised Sri Krishna paramatma, extolling the virtues of *yogabhyasa*, and from this it is clear that yoga gives very superior benefits.

Everyone has a right to do yoga. Everyone — brahmin, kshatriya, vaishya, sudra, gñani, strong, women, men, young, the old and very old, the sick, the weak, boys, girls, etcetera, all are entitled to *yogabhyasa* with no restrictions on age or caste. This is because yogabhyasa rapidly gives maximum visible benefits to all. It does not stop anybody from acquiring the visible results of practice, whatever their capabilities. Everyone is entitled, irrespective of caste, to follow the path of *yogabhyasa* even in order to obtain divine virtues and the resulting eight *animadi siddhis*, and, if one ignores these *siddhis*, to proceed further on the ultimate path. But many do not agree with this opinion. This only reveals their confusion and the absence of a *sattvic* state of mind. (The *sastras* do not forbid yoga for anyone.) Whoever wishes to do yoga has the right to do it. Yet whoever it is, it is very important that they should only learn all the aspects and practise it under the guidance of a proper guru. One encounters obstacles and problems if yoga is practised without a guru. But "Ruffians, those who eat wrong food, talk filth or use abusive language, those who speak ill of others, lie about others, are obsessed with food, those who are addicted to sensual pleasures, those who pretend to be good, those who destroy and cheat, carry aversion in the mind, those who are disrespectful of the *vedas*, are alcoholics, or have any such bad habits, these people, no matter what caste or religion, are not fit to practise yoga." This is firmly stated by Gherandacarya. The reason for this

is that although these people are capable of practising yoga, these practitioners with their cunning could cause problems and injuries to others in spite of the *yogabhyasa* being "pure". There have been many examples to substantiate this in the *puranas* and in our experience. For example, everybody knows that pure cow's milk gives good health and happiness. Yet if it is poured in a cup made of pig's skin or dog's skin, it turns into poison and becomes harmful. Similarly if you teach the pure divine nectar of yoga to ruffians and cheats, it will only cause disaster. Like a king who entrusts his kingdom to a no-good useless son who destroys it instead of protecting it, a guru with good intentions may teach yoga to cheats and the latter will not know how to use it properly and will cause only destruction to the world.

Those who are eager to learn good skills, those who can learn to control their senses and are peaceful by nature, those who speak the truth, who wish to serve their guru, who are devoted to their mother and father, who do *karma* according to the *sastra*, who are clean, who love bathing in the Ganga, who follow their caste *dharma*, who are modest and patriotic, who have pride in their family, all these people are good vessels for yoga. If the guru, following the correct path and method, advises such people and makes them practise in front of him, they will quickly become adept. The readers should remember this very well. You will not become a skilled yogi just by putting on the costume and faking it. Whatever occupation you are engaged in, you have to be very serious and strict and dedicated and at least follow the proper standards and restraints. Those who do not fall under the previous categories do not have the right to practise yoga.

Now I ask the reader to pay attention to what I am going to say. When we venture into some affair expecting a huge profit, only by being prepared to suffer any obstacles that we may encounter along the way will we then accrue the desired benefits. If you leave it halfway, it is like falling down. I ask you to bear the difficulty and pain that you may encounter.

Yoga practitioners initially have to take special care of their mind and body. Even if one is initially a little careless about the *atma*, this will not create problems. But as he proceeds in the practice, the practitioner has to pay equal attention to the mind, body and *atma*. Both the body and the mind have equal relation to the *atma*. The body is called the *jadam*. *Jadam* is that which is senseless or has no cognitive abilities. "*Siryate iti sariram*": according to this definition, the body is that which will decay someday.

The mind (primary atom) is so subtle that it is like a miniscule atom compared to an atom and its nature is oscillating. We can know that the body has a certain nature, but we cannot easily determine the nature of the mind. But with

difficulty, you can learn to know your mind. Through *dharana* and *dhyana* it is possible to know your mind but it is very difficult to see the *atma* through these methods. But through the strength of the practice of *pranayama*, once you stop the oscillating nature of mind you can reach the level of *dhyana, nididhyasanam*, and *samadhi*, and through that you can see the *atma*.

At this point the readers should definitely keep in mind the following essential and important concepts that I am going to state.

1. Among the three — the body, mind and *atma*, the body is the gross *jadam*, the mind is the subtle *jadam*. But the *atma* is not a *jadam*. It has the nature of energy, has light (consciousness), and completely pervades all gross and subtle objects. Moreover, it gives identity and form to all objects and yet it is not affected by their activities. The closest comparison is space. Space contains so many different objects and has so many forms packed into it. Yet we can directly perceive that space exists distinct from these objects and is not associated with any of the objects contained within it, and that its nature is not affected by the properties of any of the objects contained in it.

2. Of these three, the *atma* is the most important. Therefore in the three states of *jagrata* (waking), *swapna* (dream), and *sushupti* (deep sleep), we, our body and *atma*, completely experience the relevant positions and movements of these states. But one might ask the question as to whether it is possible to experience anything in a proper deep sleep (*nidra*). But after waking up, he says "Aha, I slept well!". He explains to others that during the time of good sleep, he knows that he has experienced his happy contented self. If he has not experienced this happiness in a time of deep sleep how could he say this? So even during the time of deep sleep, the experience of the *atma* is there. Instead of being involved in external activities the mind has turned inwards. The reason for this inward focus is that there is no taste for outside activities. One who has experienced the taste of soft exquisite sweet food will not desire gross rough tasteless food. Similarly, during deep sleep, the mind, which can experience the bliss of the true contented *atma* will not have any interest in external activities or objects. Hence, in these three things, the body, mind and *atma*, there is no doubt that the *atma* is the most important.

Only if there is a connection with the *atma* can the activities of the mind and body occur. When there is no connection with the *atma*, the lifeless inactive body will stiffen and fall like a log and in a short time will smell bad and decay. Everybody knows this.

The first layer of the *atma* is the mind and the second is the body. Between these there is a close relationship. By the peaceful nature created by the good

health of the body the mind becomes quiet and steady. The steadiness and quietness of the mind brings about the experience of the blissful state of *atma*. The place to perceive this experience is deep sleep.

3. *Atma* is that which can never be destroyed. That is, it is unchanging and does not take different forms every moment. But the body and mind are changing constantly and take on different forms every moment. When the body withers, the *atma* acquires a new body. It is as if we were discarding old clothes and acquiring new ones. The new body one gets depends on the results of one's life and actions with desire of results (*kaamya karma phalam*). If one is *nishkaamyakarma* (one engaged in unselfish action free of worldly desires), the *atma* will not be bound to any form of *prakrta* body. The sun is very bright. Yet, even though the sunlight pervades everything, there is no connection between the sun and all that it illuminates. In the same way, the *atma* without the body which results from *nishkaamyakarma* occupies everything and inhabits every body and yet does not mix with the *gunas* and the *doshas* of any body.

There are many such secrets in yoga that exhibit the various interwoven connections among these. I do not want to bother the readers by explaining all this in detail. But I would like to say one or two things. Pay careful attention. Suppose that we cut off all food at once and begin to fast. Day by day the body begins to lose all its strength and its shine will reduce. The mind begins to lose its vitality and loses the ability to recognize anybody or absorb anything and its power diminishes. If this fast continues for seven or eight days, we lose the ability to sit down and get up. After fifteen days, we will become unconscious and the body will wither. Our sight and hearing reduces and all the senses and organs in the body will lose their strength to function or perform their activities. They are there but yet not there. In this state, the life force also reaches the state where it leaves the body. This makes it clear that there is a connection between the body, mind and *atma*. By giving up food, one understands this connection.

Among those who follow a proper diet, the interwoven connections between the body, the mind and the *atma* are established properly and the *indriyas* will be heightened and their relevant activities will flourish.

Secondly, we have eleven *indriyas* — the five *gñana indriyas*, the five *karma indriyas* and the mind. Among these, even if one or two of the *indriyas* or the *karma indriyas* are absent, the body will continue to function. But if the *prana vayu* leaves the body, the body cannot function and all its activities will cease. Therefore, the statement of experience is that the *prana vayu* is superior to all the *indriyas*.

Chapter 2

Investigations of the Yoganga

A man can live in his body for as long as he wishes, not just one hundred years. But for that, *prana vayu suddhi* is essential. *Prana vayu suddhi* means to keep *prana vayu* under one's control. If *prana vayu* is to be kept under our control, *pranayama* is the most important tool. Our ancestors followed these useful instructions and so lived as long as they wished and served as a support for the people of this world and even today exist as famous and enlightenened souls. But now, day by day, we keep destroying the techniques of *pranayama*. We mistrust our history and the great people who came before us and undertake physical exercises and movements that are dangerous to our lives. As a result, we age within a few years of birth, struggle and stagger to a corner and fall down.

I have described the methods and rules for following *pranayama* in the chapter on *pranayama*. It is important to first learn that through the practice of *asana* and *pranayama* we keep our body, mind, *prana*, *indriyas*, and *atma* in a proper state — this is yoga.

There are many types of this yoga — *1. hatha yoga*, *2. mantra yoga*, *3. laya yoga*, *4. raja yoga*.

Hatha yoga focusses mainly on descriptions of the methods for doing *asanas*.

Raja yoga teaches the means to improve the skills and talents of the mind through the processes of *dharana* and *dhyana*. It also explains how to bring the eleven *indriyas* under control and stop their activities in the third eye (the eye of wisdom), the *ajña cakra*, or the thousand-petalled lotus position (that is turn their attention inward and not outward) and describes how to see the *jivatma*, the *paramatma* and all the states of the universe. But even here it is mentioned that to clean the *nadis* it is necessary to follow the *pranayama kramas*.

Asana and *pranayama* are initially extremely important. But if one wants

to master *asana* and *pranayama*, it is essential to bring the *indriyas* under one's control.

Yoga consists of eight *angas* which are *yama*, *niyama*, *asana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara*, *dharana*, *dhyana* and *samadhi*.

2.1 Yama and Niyama

Ahimsa, *satya*, *asteya*, *brahmacharya*, *kshama*, *dhrthi*, *daya*, *arjavam*, *mitahara* and *sauca* — these ten are called **yama**.

1. To never harm anybody through mind, speech or action is **ahimsa**.
2. To always speak the truth with good intentions and through that be of use to all living beings is **satya**.
3. To not usurp other people's wealth through mind, speech or action is called **asteya**.
4. To not waste your *viryam* by any means is called **brahmacharyam**.
5. To not change the state of your mind irrespective of whether you get the expected benefits of your actions or not is **kshama** (equanimity).
6. Whatever hurdles arise to your happiness or welfare, to continue to undertake with mental steadfastness and courage whatever work that has to be done is **dhrthi**.
7. Be it enemy, friend, stranger (an alien or somebody you are unconnected to or indifferent to) or relative, to behave towards all with the same good intentions without differentiation is **daya**.
8. To keep the state of mind honest (on the straight path) is **arjavam**.
9. To use half the stomach for food and to keep the other half in equal parts for water and for air flow (*vayu sancharam*) is **mitahara**.
10. To maintain cleanliness internally and externally is **sauca**.

To not hoard money is called *asanchayam* and this is also a *yama*. To perform good deeds without fear is a *yama*.

Tapas, *santosha*, *asthikya*, *daana*, *isvara puja*, *siddhanta vakya sravana*, *hri*, *mathi*, *japa*, *homam* — these ten are called **niyama**.

1. Cold and hot, joy and sorrow, adoration and aversion — to maintain a steady state of mind when encountering these and to follow the dharma of your caste is **tapas**.

2. The sorrows and pleasure that result from any occurrences due to variations of time and place — to accept these with a peaceful, contented mind is **santosha**.

3. To have definite belief that for all the fourteen worlds, there is one *paramatma* who protects these worlds and to be sure that without him, this diverse universe could not have come into existence, and to make up your mind to find and know (realize) this *paramatma* is **asthikya**.

4. To give away your earnings (earned honestly) to good causes without any reason and without expecting any returns is **daana**.

5. To worship one's chosen deity in the proper manner according to the *vedas* is **isvara puja**.

6. For the purpose of establishing *sanatana dharma*, to study the *vedas*, the *vedanta*, *smrti*, the *puranas* and *ithihasas*, to do *vedic* study and recitation of these, to understand the functioning of various *dharmas*, and to listen to the discourses of great sages is **siddhanta vakya sravana**.

7. If you have strayed with one of the three — your body, possessions or spirit — out of ignorance, to inform the elders about this without hiding it, to feel remorse and promise never to repeat it, and to be humble in one's mind is **hri** (modesty).

8. Following one's path as specified by the *sastras* and while doing this to visualize with one-pointed mind the divine auspicious form of one's chosen deity and to perform *dhyana* on this deity is **mathi**.

9. To properly chant the great *mantras* learned under the guidance of one's guru with correct intonation, metre and rhythm and with understanding of their meaning is **japa**.

10. *Nitya naimitika kaamya* are the three types of *srouta smarta karmas* (prescribed or recorded vedic rites and rituals). Leaving aside the *kaamya karma* (action or rite performed with a self-interested motive or with a view towards desired results), to perform the *nitya naimitika karmas* (*nitya karma*

is a constant or continuous rite or action, *naimitika* is a regularly recurring or periodic rite or action) at the proper time in order to please the *devatas*, and after reciting all the *mantras* to put the *havis* (rice) in the fire as described in the *sastras* is **homam**.

These ten *yama* and *niyama* should be carefully practised as far as possible. This will have many benefits. The third part of yoga is *asana*.

One should practise *asana* in a superior, very clean place, clean all the *nadis* in our body and master the *vayus* to bring them under our control.

To begin practising yoga, the two seasons, spring (the months of *chittirai* and *vaigasi*) (Apr. 15 — Jun. 15) or autumn (the months of *aipasi* and *karthikai*) (Oct. 15 — Dec. 15) are superior.

If a *yogabhyasi* eats when the *vayu sancharam* is equal in both nostrils and sleeps when the air flow is in the *surya nadi* (right side) he will have superior health.

2.2 Announcement

According to the *veda sastras*, there are as many *asanas* as there are living beings in the world. There are 84 lakh living beings. In ancient times, people were able to perform and visibly experience all kinds of *asanas*. As time passed, as a result of changes in people's behaviour, gait, body and expressions, several *asanas* have become obscured. *Veda sastras* have also been suppressed or hidden by people who abhor *sanatana dharma*. In these times, whatever *veda sastras* are available in practice, they are confined to places of discussion solely for the purposes of discussion and have not been assimilated into experience. Moreover, among those who are studying *veda sastras*, some are only doing it for their own fame (for calling themselves *vedic scholars*). Others are indifferent and careless about it. For some others still, even chanting or recitation of the *veda sastras* is a headache. Truly very few people are following the *veda sastras*. In this world, if there are only very few people are like this, how can we ever find them. Even if you find these people, they themselves are undergoing all kinds of problems and annoyances. Even so, in India, there are some concerned kings and great men who have made the necessary effort to keep the study going and have brought this into the experience of modern young men and women, enabling them to live long lives in good health and happiness. For this we should be very happy.

Here is the information we now need to discuss: of the 84 lakh *asanas*, their own writings reveal that during the time of Pujyapada Sri Sankaracarya, he was

able to master (bring into his experience) 84 thousand *asanas*; during the time of Ethiraja Sri Ramanujacarya, he was able to master 64000 *asanas*, and during the time of Sri Madhavacarya and the time of Sri Nigamantha Desikar, they were able to master 24000 *asanas*. In recent times, during the time of our *jagatguru* Sri Narasimha Bharati Swamigal, I have heard him state several times that he has mastered 1600 *asanas*.

In Nepal, living in Muktinarayanakshetram Sri Rama Mohana Brahmacari Guru Maharaj has mastered/(brought into his experience) 7000 *asanas*. I have seen this directly and through his guidance and advice, I have mastered 700 *asanas*. Nowadays (in present times), there are only 84 *asanas* illustrated in the books available and it is the same with some renowned yogis. Some have mastered a few more.

There are 84 lakh diseases that affect living beings. Generally, in ancient times, people cured all the diseases that affected them by the practice of this *yogasana* and *pranayama*. Even those diseases that cannot be cured by medicines in the *ayurveda sastras* could be cured by practising *yogasana* and *pranayama*. At present time, the prosperity and wealth of our country is diminishing day by day. Similarly, for various reasons, all the *vijñana sastras* relating to the body and *yoga sastra* are also diminishing. Let the readers themselves know this secret.

Now, in this chapter, I will demonstrate the *yogasanas* that are in practice, the method to practise them, their names, and the benefits received by their practice.

2.3 Warning

The obstacles to becoming an adept yogi are sleep, laziness and disease. One has to remove these by the root and throw them away in order to keep the body under one's control, to conquer the senses, and to make the *prana vayu* appear directly in the *susumna nadi*. *Asana siddhi* will help all this. To acquire this skill in *asana* quickly, recite the following *slokam* every day before practising yoga:

जीवमणि भ्राजत्फणा सहस्र विधृत विश्वं
भरामण्डलाय अनन्ताय नागराजाय नमः

Jivamani Bhrajatphana sahasra vidhdhrt vishvam
Bharamandalaya anantaya nagarajaya namaha

Repeat this prayer, do *namaskaram* to *adisesha*, perform the relevant *puja*, meditate on *adisesha* and then begin the practice. When I explain the rules of

yogasana, if the position of the head has not been specified, then keep the head in *jalandara bandha*. Similarly, if it does not specify where to place the gaze, then the gaze should be directed towards the midbrow. If the position of the hands has not been specified, then the hands should be kept as in *siddhasana*. Whenever there is a *krama* where some part of the body has to be held with the hand, and the placement of the hand has not been described, hold the relevant part of the body with the first three fingers of the hand (including the thumb). Make sure to remember this.

When practising the *asanas*, it is important to do both the right and left sides. First practise the right side and then the left side. If you don't do this, the strength of yoga will not reach all parts of the body.

2.4 Important Observations

From ancient times, while doing *veda adhyayanam*, the *svaras* (the notes *udatta* (elevated), *anudatta* (grave) and *svarita* (middle/articulated)) in the *aksharas* (syllables) of the *vedas* are observed and mastered without fail; in music, the rules of *sruti* (division of octave), *layam* (metre or time), *thrtam* and *anuthrtam* are followed; in *pathyatmaha* (verses of 4 lines each) poems the rules for *chandas*, *yati*, and *parasam* have been established and are carefully followed; in *mantra upasana*, the *anganyasa*, *karanyasa*, *sariranyasa*, *kalaanyasa*, *matrukanyasa*, *jivanyasa*, *tattvanyasa* are experienced and understood. Similarly in *yogasana*, *pranayama* and the *mudras*, the *vinyasas* handed down from ancient times should be followed.

But nowadays, in many places, these great practitioners of *yogabhyasa* ignore *vinyasa krama* and just move and bend and shake their arms and legs and claim that they are practising *asana abhyasa*. This is being done not only in *yogabhyasa* but also in *veda adhyayanam* and in *mantra upasanas* where the rules are being ignored and people shamefully practise this as though it were part of their worldly affairs. If this behaviour continues for some time, even the *vedas* will be ruined.

Everybody knows that anything that is done without following the prescribed rules will not give any benefits. When we know that this is true, is there any need to reiterate this for the great traditions of *yogabhyasa*, *veda adhyayanam* and *mantra upasana* which provide the best benefits? Some people, who are involved in *sahavasa dosha* and interested only in worldly benefits, say that they do not see any point in following *sanatana dharma* or *karma yoga*. There are reasons for their saying this. I would like to briefly mention one or two points addressing

this.

1. They are not following the rules such as *vinyasa*.

2. Their guru is not teaching them using the secrets and techniques that are in his experience.

3. The guru has not instructed them properly about the place and time of practice, the appropriate diet and drink and activities for the practitioner. As a result of many people teaching *yogabhyasa* in this fashion, many leave the path of yoga saying that they do not see the benefits in *yogabhyasa* and fall into the traps of various diseases. They do not exercise the body properly and spend money unnecessarily. Instead of following the system properly, they lose their way and waste time on unnecessary pursuits and have started saying that these times are not appropriate for *sanatana dharma* and *karma*. Some others, in order to hide the mistakes and bad actions that they have committed, keep saying that doing *yogabhyasa* makes one go mad and intentionally deceive great people in this manner. In spite of this terrible situation, some young men and women collect some yoga texts from here and there and eagerly begin to practise in either a correct or incorrect way. For these people, god will reveal the secrets of yoga without fail. The modern age belongs to the youth. Let the god of yoga bless them to have good health, long life and body strength.

Following the path that my guru has recommended for me, I am writing down the secrets of yoga.

Yogasana and *pranayama* are of two types: *samantraka* and *amantraka*. Only those who have the right to study the *vedas* have the authority to practise the yoga that is *samantraka*. All people have the right to practise the *amantraka* type. For each *asana*, there are 3 to 48 *vinyasas*. None has fewer than 3 *vinyasas*.

When practising *asana*, the breath that is inhaled into the body and the breath that is exhaled out must be kept equal. Moreover, practise the *asana* with their *vinyasas* by breathing only through the nose.

Just as music without *sruti* and *laya* will not give any pleasure, similarly *asana* practice done without *vinyasa krama* will not give good health. When that is so, what more is there to say about long life and strength in this context?

In *yogabhyasa*, there are two types of *kriyas* — **langhana kriya** and **brahmana kriya**. One who is obese should practise *langhana kriya*. One who is thin should practise *brahmana kriya* and one who is neither fat nor thin should practise *yogabhyasa* in both.

Brahmana kriya means to take in the outside air through the nose, pull it inside, and hold it in firmly. This is called **puraka kumbhaka**.

Langhana kriya means to exhale the air that is inside the body out through

the nose and to hold the breath firmly without allowing any air from outside into the body. This is called **recaka kumbhaka**.

In *vaidya sastra*, they describe *brahmana kriya* as meaning a prescribed diet and *langhana kriya* as meaning to fast. But in *yoga sastra* it does not have this meaning. Without understanding these intricacies and secrets of yoga, some people look at the books and try to do *yogabhyasa* (like looking for Ganesa and ending up with a monkey). They get disastrous results and bring a bad name for *yoga sastra*. We need not pay any attention to their words.

If one practises *yogabhyasa* in the presence of a guru for a few years, following *vinyasa* and associated *kriyas*, the different aspects and qualities of yoga will be revealed. Instead, for those who practise an *asana* for only one day, and then ridicule it the next day asking what has been gained by this, the correct answer can be given by a farmer. If a person sows some seeds and then complains the next day that no seedlings have grown, no farmer will tolerate such a ridiculous statement.

Some people say that *yogabhyasa* is only for men and not for women. Some others say that yoga is only for *brahmins*, *kshatriyas*, and *vaishyas* and not for others.

One can immediately state that these people have never read the *yoga sastras*.

Some other great people scare people by saying that *yogabhyasa* will drive one mad, and have proceeded to completely destroy the *jitendriya tattvam* (doctrine of conquering the senses) and other such *vairagyam* in this world. There seems to be no limit to this kind of hilarious statements.

Those who have minutely examined the *Upanishads*, the *Brihadaranyaka*, and *Yoga Yajnavalkya Samhita*, and who have carefully studied and compared the yoga texts will not utter such foul sentences.

In each section for each particular *asana*, we have included a description and an enumeration of its *vinyasas*. The *vinyasas* in which the head is raised are to be done with *puraka kumbhaka* and the ones in which the head is lowered must be done with *recaka kumbhaka*. ***Uthpluthi*** (raising the body from the floor with only the support of both hands on the floor is called *uthpluthi*) should be done on *recaka kumbhaka* for a fat person and on *puraka kumbhaka* for a thin person.

Those who ignore these rules and only do *yogabhyasa* according to their wishes, by following picture books, will be unhappy as a result because they will obtain absolutely no benefits from this. These people then ridicule *yogavidya* and their *sanatana dharma*, and start doing physical exercises that are contrary to our country's *ahara guna* (diet), *jala guna* (water) and *vayu guna* (climate) and waste a lot of money on this. Who is at fault?

Ordinarily, any physical activity will initially cause the body pain. Similarly, *yogabhyasa* will also initially cause some physical pain. But in a few days, the pain will subside on its own. When we do physical exercises, there are two types: exercising some parts of the body and exercising the entire body. Nowadays, we follow Western exercises and methodology, think that this is easy, spend a lot of money on it, procure expensive equipment from abroad and exercise with no consistency or routine. This is not an achievement of the body but a bodiless effort or a body destroying effort. We did not make up these names. We realize this from the kinds of *kriyas* that are being followed by the practitioner of these exercises. Moreover, such exercises will give proper blood circulation to some parts of the body while reducing the blood flow in others. This will result in poor strength, and eventually will cause paralysis and lead to an early, untimely death.

To make things worse, when we observe the practitioners of the kinds of physical exercises that exist nowadays, they make loud noises while practising and we notice that they breathe through their mouths. This is very dangerous. It is a danger to our lives. We have life only as long as *prana vayu* exists in our body. Therefore, such exercises are not suitable for people in our country. It is more intelligent to spend the money nourishing the body than to spend the money on such physical exercises.

There are only three forms of physical exercises that give equal strength to the joints and blood vessels in our bodies: *yogabhyasa*, *karadi sadhana* (fencing or fighting with weapons) and archery. I don't know why people have given up the skill of archery in the present day.

Karadi sadhana can be found to exist here and there but it must be stated that even this does not follow the proper *krama* nowadays. Through no fault of anybody's, everybody starts dividing into camps, competing with one another and eventually end up fighting. Moreover, fencing is an effort only for achievement in this world and is not the way to get any permanent results. The greatest fault in *karadi sadhana* is that many do not achieve the subtle benefits of strength of mind and balance in the body. Good health, longevity, happiness, strong mind and strong body are the five aspects that are essential for a man. If these five parts are not functioning properly, one cannot understand the essence of the universe. With no understanding of this, even acquiring a good life has no meaning. In modern times, many types of strange phenomenan are occurring. Among these, using the skill of discernment to examine the good and the bad, the time has come to carefully choose only the good. This skill to discern exists only in human beings and in no other living beings. If one wants to develop such

a skill, it is essential to have complete physical strength, strength of mind, and similarly one needs to conquer each of the five aspects mentioned earlier. The secret of the five aspects is what we call yoga.

For such achievements in yoga, we do not need to send our country's money elsewhere to procure any items. Whatever money we get, there is plenty of place in our country to store it. The foreigners have stolen all the skills and knowledge and treasures of mother India, either right in front of us or in a hidden way. They pretend that they have discovered all this by themselves, bundle it together, and then bring it back here as though doing us a favour and in exchange take all the money and things we have saved up for our family's welfare. After some time passes, they will try and do the same thing with *yogavidya*. We can clearly state that the blame for this is that while we have read the books required for the knowledge of yoga to shine, we have not understood or studied the concepts or brought them into our experience. If we still sleep and keep our eyes closed, then the foreigners will become our gurus in *yogavidya*.

We have already given the gold vessels we had to them and bought vessels from them made from bad-smelling skin and have started using these. This is a very sad state. Our descendents do not need these sorts of bad habits.

The physical exercise that is yoga, this *asana kriya* that is with us is more than enough for us. The hut that we live in is enough. We don't need excessive amounts of money for that. What yoga *mata* wishes for us is that we eat only the *sattvic* food that Bharatmata can give us. The ability that our youngsters have to follow outsiders can also be used to follow the knowledge and skills of our country. I have complete faith in this. In schools, it is very important to have this *yoga vidya* in the curriculum. I do not need to emphasize this specifically to the great scholars who know the secrets of *vidya*.

For the achievement of all the five *angas*, the means is yoga. That which gives us good health and good fortune is yoga. That which gives us long life is yoga. That which gives us power of intellect is yoga. That which makes us wealthy is yoga. That which makes us human is yoga. That which makes our Bharatmata virtuous and faithful is yoga. That which gives us the power of discernment to know what we should do and what we should not is yoga. The knowledge that helps us understand why we have taken on this life is yoga. That which gives us the answer to the question — where is our god? — is yoga and not anything else. We can say this confidently.

> "Yoga is the foundation
> for both *siddhi* and liberation

On analysis, yoga alone paves the way
for complete ultimate knowledge of everything
A systematic pristine practice of yoga is
a perfect tool for understanding one's true nature
Yoga is a state of oneness of *jivatma* and *paramatma*

That which was said then is also a proof of this.

Chapter 3

Chapter on Yogabhyasa

After continuing to practise the first two *angas* — the *yama* and *niyama* — the relevant and important concepts required for the practice of the third and fourth *angas* — *asana* and *pranayama* — will be described in this section: the place and time to practise, dietary rules and restrictions, understanding *nadi sodhana*, *vayu sodhana* (that is, examination of the breath, determining what we are aware of and not aware of about our breath, and the correction of breath).

Yoga should not be practised in a country where there is no faith in *yogabhyasa*, or in a dangerous forest where you cannot look after your person, or in overcrowded cities, or in houses where there is no peace.

3.1 Places to practise Yoga

The following places are superior: a place with plenty of water, a fertile place, a place where there is a bank of a holy river, where there are no crowds, a clean solitary place — such places are superior. In such a place, yoga can be practised. In such a place find a region where there is a well or a pond or a lake. Build a fence around this area and in a flat region in the middle of this build a beautiful *ashram*. In this location, make arrangements so that insects like ants, mosquitoes, and bed bugs and insects that can draw blood cannot enter. Moreover, it is necessary to clean the space with cowdung daily. Inside the building, put up pictures on the four walls to encourage the growth of *vairagya* (detachment), *jitendriya* (control of the senses), and *yoga vidya abhyasa*.

In the *yogabhyasa sala* decorated as described above, spread a seat of grass on the ground in a clean space not facing the front door. Over that spread a tiger skin or deer skin and over that put a white blanket or a clean white cloth.

Prepare such a place for sitting. To make sure no bad smell enters this place, burn *sambrani* or incense. After completing their yoga practice consisting of *asana* and *pranayama*, the yoga practitioner must rest for fifteen minutes keeping the body on the floor before coming outside. If you come outdoors soon after completing *yogabhyasa*, the breeze will enter the body through the minute pores on the skin and cause many kinds of disease. Therefore, one should stay inside until the sweat subsides, rub the body nicely and sit contentedly and rest for a short period.

3.2 Discussion of when to begin Yogabhyasa

In the spring, the months of *chittirai* and *vaigasi* (Apr. 15 — Jun. 15), in autumn, the months of *aipasi* and *karthikai* (Oct. 15 — Dec. 15), and in winter, the month of *margazhi* (Dec. 15 — Jan. 15) — if you start the practice of yoga at these times, it will not cause any diseases in your body and you will be able to become an adept in yoga. The other months are mediocre.

3.3 Dietary Restrictions for the Yogabhyasi

Food must be eaten in measured quantities. It must be very pure. The food should not be overly hot, it should not have cooled down too much (very cold food should be avoided). Savouring the taste, fill the stomach with such food until it is half full. After this, leave a quarter of the stomach for water and leave the rest empty to allow for movement of air. For example, one who normally has the capacity to eat 1/4 measure of food, should eat 1/8 measure of food and leave the rest of the stomach as mentioned above.

> For whom there is neither excess nor less
> of sleep, food and activity
> For him alone it is possible
> to attain the state of yoga

The reader should keep these great words from the Gita Saram in their mind.

More importantly, before explaining the various details of *yogabhyasa* and the benefits rendered, the reader should note one warning. That is, if anyone asks what the meaning of the phrase "*anda pinda caracaram*" ("what is the relationship between the microcosm and macrocosm"), they give the easy answer "the complete universe".

This is definitely accurate! But they don't understand the real meaning of its philosophy. There will be no haste to understand the real meaning since one already has the correct answer. There is an urgency to explain this here in order to have faith in this statement.

Andam (Macrocosm) means the entire world. *Pindam* (microcosm) consists of all the mobile and immobile beings and objects in this world. *Caram* is that *prana* which is between the *andam* and *pindam* uniting and differentiating the two and causing them to function. That is, *Svasam* (breath) is *vayu* (air). *Acaram* is the state of compressing the *vayu* and bringing together *andam* and *pindam* in a state of unity, that is, uniting the *jivatma* and *paramatma* together. To get to the state where the *prana vayu* can help the *jivatma* and *paramatma* unite, we need to practise *recaka puraka kumbhaka* according to the *krama* of yoga in order to regularly be able to bring this *vayu* under our control. This is similar to a man taming wild animals in the forest and slowly bringing them under his control. The yoga practitioner should similarly gradually bring the *vayu* under his control.

Otherwise, like the man who can get killed by the wild animals, *vayu* will also kill the practitioner. Therefore, the practitioner must proceed with minute attention and extreme caution and must make a habit of observing the rules given here.

3.3.1 Food that can be eaten

Old thin cooked rice, wheat *roti* or *poori*, *halwa*, white or green corn *roti*, *moong dal*, *urad dal*, green plaintain, plantain flower, banana stem, tender eggplant, spices and herbs, edible roots, ghee, milk, sweet fruits, gooseberry, things made out of wheat flour, cardomom, bay leaf, cinnamon and such fragrant spices and foods can be eaten.

3.3.2 Food that should be avoided

Bitter, sour, salty, hot (overly spicy), yoghurt, vegetables that cannot be digested easily, alcohol, addictive narcotics, jack fruit, wood apple, pumpkin, onion, asafoetida, butter, curdled milk, too much sweet, dry coconut, mangoes and other foods that increase the heat in the body and oily, fried foods should be avoided.

3.4 Section on recommended activities and activities to avoid

3.4.1 Activities to avoid

The following activities should be given up: long journeys requiring one to stay in a village at night; having a bath after sunrise; fasting; stressful physical exertion other than *asana pranayama*; to eat once a day; not eating or fasting; to sleep after eating during the day; talking too much; too much sex; to dry yourself by a fireplace; to be too close to a fire; to bathe after oiling yourself with bad-smelling oil.

3.4.2 Activities that should be done

These activities must be practised: Get up early in the morning at 4:00 am every day and have a bath in a great river. If that is not possible, have a bath in clean hot water. Eat in the afternoon and at night, both times as mentioned earlier. Eat measured quantities of soft sweet food. Place signs of one's (religious) tradition on the body and put on clean clothes. Follow the rules of your caste and creed and work according to your *dharma*.

Worship the idols representing the deities. Have sincere heartfelt devotion to the guru and elderly. *Tattvam* and *sastram* — study and research these constantly. During times of war constantly practise *asana* and *pranayama* and the earlier *yogangas*. Bathe using good-smelling oil. In the night, eat food with milk and ghee. These activities must be carried out.

3.5 Section on Nadis

There is a ball of flesh like a bird's egg above the *lingasthana* (genitals) and below the navel. This is called the *kandasthana*. There are 72000 *nadis* surrounding this. These *nadis* radiate and spread out in all four directions of the body.

Among these, ten *nadis* are very important. Their names are: 1. *ida*, 2. *pingala*, 3. *susumna*, 4. *gandhari*, 5. *hasti jihwa*, 6. *poosha*, 7. *yasaswini*, 8. *alampusa*, 9. *guhu*, 10. *sankini*. These ten *nadis* are the primary support for all the other *nadis*. Therefore, these are called the *mula nadis* and are also called the *kanda tantugal*. Among these, the *nadis* are situated as follows: the *ida nadi* is located on the left side of the nose; the *pingala nadi* is located on the right side

of the nose; the *susumna nadi* is situated between the two; the *gandhari nadi* is located in the left eye; the *hasti jihwa nadi* is located in the right eye; the *poosha nadi* is situated in the right ear; the *yasaswini nadi* is situated in the left ear; the *alampusa nadi* is located in the face; the *guhu nadi* is situated in the base of the genitals (*linga sthala*); and the *sankini nadi* is located in the *muladhara*. Moreover, the *ida nadi* is also called the *candra nadi*, the *pingala nadi* is also called the *surya nadi* and the *susumna nadi* is also called the *agni nadi*.

Among these three, the *ida* and *pingala* exist only up to the tip of the nose. But the *susumna nadi* goes up to the top of the skull (*brahamarantram*) and is also helpful in the movement of *prana vayu* in our heart.

3.6 Section on the investigation of Shatkriyas

"When the body is born, it contains, by its nature, *vata, pitta, kapha*. The appropriate *vayus* occupy their appropriate *nadis* in a prescribed manner. If the flow of the *vayus* is not correct in the correct *nadi* and path, then the body becomes diseased and there is danger for life." (Garbha Upanishad).

If one wants a cure from some disease, even supposing that there are many medicines, for the disease to be cured by these medicines, it is essential that there should be a proper flow of *vayu* in our bodies without any obstructions. When the *vayu sancharam* is proper (according to *krama*), then even taking medicines becomes irrelevant. The activity known as *pranayama* is very important for the *vayu sancharam* in our body to be correct (according to *krama*), for the *nadis* to get cleaned every day, and for the blood to flow properly in the *nadis*. This *kriya* is a very important support for the *vayu sancharam* in the body. If *pranayama* is to be successful, there should not be a disproportionate measure of *vata*, *pitta*, or *kapha* in our body. If *vayu sancharam* is not proper, if *vata, pitta* or *kapha* increase, our body begins to tremble, we develop breathlessness and bloating of the stomach. The joints of the bones and *nadis* will develop disease or pain without proper *vayu* flow and life will get gradually shortened.

In order to eliminate these sorts of bad *vata*, *pitta*, and *kapha*, you have to practise *yogasana* and you should know and practise the six *kriyas* related to yoga.

These *asanas* and *kriyas* are explained in detail in many upanishads and yoga texts. The essence of this material from the old texts is mentioned here as well.

Kriyas: The **kriyas** are of six types: 1. *Dhauti Kriya*, 2. *Basti Kriya*, 3. *Neti Kriya*, 4. *Nauli Kriya*, 5. *Trataka Kriya*, and 6. *Kapalabhati Kriya*.

I. Dhauti Kriya

Dhauti Kriya is of four types: *Antar Dhauti*, *Danta Dhauti*, *Hrd Dhauti* and *Mula Sodhana Dhauti*.

1. **Antar Dhauti:** This is of four types: *vata sara dhauti*, *vari sara dhauti*, *vanhi sara dhauti*, *bahish kritham dhauti*.

   (a) **Vata Sara Dhauti:** For this, first hold the mouth like a crow's beak and gradually suck in the air. Then close the mouth and swallow the air that was sucked in. After this, allowing the air to occupy the stomach, swirl it this way and that in waves as though washing the stomach. Then send it out of the body through the anus or the nose.

   Practising this just once isn't enough to expel the sucked-in air through the anus. Practise this for several days without fail, repeating the activity at least 25 times daily. Then, after a few days it will become possible to expel the air through the anal passage.

   Those who do not have the time for this can expel the air through *recaka* or exhalation of the air out through the nose slowly and carefully. This will give very good benefits. This *vata sara dhauti* belongs to *raja yoga*.

   Benefit: It will remove all heart diseases, increase blood flow and improve the digestive power.

   (b) **Vari Sara Dhauti:** Pure hot water or cold water should be drunk until the stomach is full and the water reaches almost up to the neck. Swirl the water in the stomach this way and that, up and down. Then pull in the stomach forcefully and push it out, sending the water out through the anal opening. This belongs to *laya yoga*. This *kriya* can be mastered by practising it several times daily.

   Benefit: Removes and expels the deposits and impurities from the skeletal structure, and in all corners and joints and knots of the bones and nerves. It causes the body to shine and increases the *jathara agni*. This belongs to *raja yoga*.

   (c) **Vanhi Sara Dhauti:** The stomach along with the navel should be pulled in to touch and press against (stick to) the spine and then should be pushed forward again. Repeat this several times. While pulling the stomach in, do *recaka kumbhaka* and while pushing it out do *puraka*

kumbhaka. Practise this before eating. If you want to do this after eating, wait at least three hours. Otherwise it will be dangerous. This exercise needs to be practised daily, repeating it 84 times in a day. This belongs to *raja yoga.*

Benefit: This will remove all the diseases of the stomach and increase the *jathara agni.* It will help the *yogabhyasi* tremendously.

(d) **Bahish Kritha Dhauti:** Position the mouth like a crow's beak and suck in the air to the extent possible. Hold the air in (*kumbhaka*) and then exhale it out (*recaka*) through the nostril. This is only for those who are beginning the practice of *recaka kumbhaka.* Repeat this 25 times a day. This has to be done either before eating in the morning or before eating in the evening. If one keeps increasing the practice of this correctly, it develops the ability to hold the breath (*kumbhaka*) for long periods. Not only that, it will automatically become possible to expel the air through the anal opening. Once you begin to expel the air through the anal opening, you should not then try to exhale it out through the nose. Through this practice, after acquiring the ability to hold the breath for 1.5 hours, proceed as follows: Standing in water up to the navel, very carefully and cautiously push out the large intestine which is the *sakti nadi* located in the lower abdomen up to the *muladhara cakra* through the anal opening. Wash it with water until it is clean and then push it back inside through the same anal opening.

Warning: This *kriya* is only for *hatha yogis* and not for *raja yogis, laya yogis* or *mantra yogis.*

Benefit: It will destroy all the impurities in the body. Not only will it give a shine to the body, it will not allow any disease into the body.

2. **Danta Dhauti:** This is of four types, namely: *dantamula dhauti, jihwamula dhauti, karna dhauti* and *kapalantra dhauti.*

(a) **Dantamula Dhauti:** Scrub the teeth daily in the early morning with the juice of the *manjana* or *kakkali* plant or with clean mud. Then rinse and wash with clean filtered water.

Benefit: Removes bad breath and odour from the mouth and gives strength to the teeth.

(b) **Jihwa Dhauti:** Scrub the tongue vigourously using the three fingers of the right hand excluding the thumb and little finger. Spit out all the phlegm that comes out while rubbing the tongue. Afterwards, wash the tongue with water, gargle and rinse the mouth. Then rub cow's butter on the tongue. After this, with a small iron tong, hold the tip of the tongue lightly and little by little pull it out. This is only for *hatha yogis*.

Benefit: If this is done daily, without fail, in the morning and the evening, it will help prepare to do *khecari mudra*. It removes all the *doshas* of the tongue and speech will be clear.

(c) **Karna Dhauti:** Clean the ears as follows: Join the index and ring fingers together, insert them into the ears and then twist them around.

Benefit: This will remove deafness. It will prevent all diseases from entering the ear and give the power to hear the inner *nadam*.

(d) **Kapalantra Dhauti:** Using the thumb of the right hand, rub the underside of the tongue daily.

Benefit: If you continue to practise this *kriya* daily in the early morning as soon as you get up and after eating in the afternoon and evening, it will remove the *kapha dosha*, clean the *nadis* and give good eyesight.

3. **Hrd Dhauti:** This is of three types: *danda dhauti*, *vamana dhauti* and *vastra dhauti*.

(a) **Danda Dhauti:** Take a banana stem or turmeric stem or a neem twig and swallow it with your mouth. Take it in up to the heart region and then immediately take it back out.

Benefit: It will push out excessive *vata* and *pitta*, remove heart diseases and increase good health.

(b) **Vamana Dhauti:** Daily, after eating, drink water until the stomach is full. Then fill the mouth with water. Lifting the head up, keep looking up at the sky. Remain in this position for some time and then spit out the water.

Benefit: It will destroy diseases of *pitta* and *kapha* (*sleshmam*) and increase good health.

(c) **Vastra Dhauti:** Take a soft thin white cloth that is four *angulas* wide and fifteen *mozhams* long soaked in water. Swallow it daily before sunrise, increasing the amount swallowed by one *mozham* every day, gradually taking it to the stomach and then very carefully removing it. Practise this daily, initially repeating it once, then twice, then thrice and eventually, through the strength of practice gradually increasing up to 12 times daily.

Benefit: After you have the skill to swallow the entire 15 *mozham* of cloth, practise this *kriya* daily at the correct time, without food. Then terrible diseases such as *gulmam* (acites, incurable stomach tumour), fever, *pleeham* (spleen diseases), *kushtam* (skin diseases), and *kapha* (phlegm diseases) will get destroyed and the body will be healthy.

4. **Mula Sodhana Dhauti:** Insert a turmeric stem or the middle finger of the left hand into the anal canal, scrub the area properly, and then wash it.

   Benefit: Constipation, indigestion, *ama dosham* (diseases caused by deposits of toxic undigested food in various parts of the body) — such terrible diseases will be removed. The body begins to glow and the *jathara agni* will increase.

II. Basti Kriya

This is of two types: *jala basti* and *sthala basti*.

1. **Jala Basti:** Stand in water up to the navel. Then get into *utkatasana* and through the strength of *kumbhaka*, force the water in through the opening of the anal canal. Practise this as described and before twelve repetitions, sufficient water will reach the lower abdomen. After this, following the *krama*, push the water that is in the abdomen little by little back out through the anal opening. This should be done three times a day.

   Benefit: Diabetes, urinary diseases, obstruction of bowels — such diseases caused by bad *apana vayu* will be removed. One acquires a handsome beautiful physical appearance and the body develops a shine and beauty like that of Manmada. This belongs to *hatha yoga*.

2. **Sthala Basti:** Sit in *pascimottanasana*. Through *aswini mudra* draw in the *vayu* and push it out and turn the stomach in all four directions.

   Benefit: Constipation, indigestion — such diseases will be destroyed. It will increase *jathara agni*. This is *raja yoga*.

III. Neti Kriya

Take one span (the length between the thumb and little finger) of thin thread. Suck it in through the nostril and hold the two ends of the thread with the two hands after one end comes out of the mouth. Very carefully (caution!) pull it up and down about 10 — 12 times. This thread should then be removed through the mouth.

Benefit: Removes many types of *kapha* diseases. It will give good eyesight and will help to become adept at *khecari mudra*. This is *hatha yoga*.

IV. Nauli Kriya

The nerves of the lower abdomen are pulled into the stomach and are then rapidly turned around this way and that, to the left and right sides, all around the stomach.

Benefit: Removes all diseases and strengthens digestive power. This is *raja yoga*.

V. Trataka Kriya

Fix the gaze at one point or object without moving or blinking the eye until it starts to tear.

Benefit: Removes all diseases of the eye; gives good eyesight. Not only that, it develops the power to become adept at *sambhavi mudra* and will also prevent long sightedness. This is *raja yoga*.

VI. Kapalabhati Kriya

This is of three types: *vyut krama*, *vama krama* and *cit krama*.

1. **Vyutkrama Kapalabhati Kriya:** Draw in water through the nostril and send it out through the mouth. This is *raja yoga*.

   Benefit: Cures all phlegm-oriented diseases.

2. **Vamakrama Kapalabhati Kriya:** (left side) Draw in (inhale) the air through the left nostril and exhale it out through the right nostril. Then draw in the air through the right nostril and exhale it out through the left nostril. After you do this four times, draw in clean water through the left nostril. Lift the face up, press the left nostril with the finger, tilt the head slightly to the right side and spill out the water through the right nostril. In a similar manner, the water taken in through the right nostril should be expelled or spilled out through the left nostril.

   Benefit: Dripping phlegm diseases (running nose) will be prevented. It will develop the strength of the *indriyas* to smell even the most subtle smell. This is *raja yoga*.

3. **Citkrama Kapalabhati Kriya:** Take water in through the mouth, swallow it and then expel it out through the nose. This is to be repeated twenty-three times.

   Benefit: This will remove diseases of phlegm, will also prevent old age, and will give lustre or brilliance to the body. This is *hatha yoga*.

   All the *kapalabhati kriyas* should be done with clean, cool (unheated) water. The superior time for practising these *kriyas* is early in the morning before sunrise. For the first fifteen days of practising these *kapalabhati kriyas*, there will be a burning sensation in the nose, mouth and throat and you will develop a little phlegm or congestion. Ignoring these symptoms, very faithfully follow the instructions and practise the *kriyas*. All the benefits mentioned above will be experienced very quickly.

3.7 Section on Vayu

Investigation of the ten types of Vayu: There are ten types of vayu in our body: *prana*, *apana*, *vyana*, *udana*, *samana*, *naga*, *kurma*, *krkara*, *devadatta*, *dhananjaya*.

1. **The Place where Prana Vayu resides**

   Prana Vayu — Its function: It is located in the heart. Its main purpose is to expel all the unwanted impurities from the body and to draw in clean outside air in order to keep the *jathara agni* burning. It is an important support for the extension of life.

2. **Apana Vayu — Its function:**

   This resides below the lower part of the *muladhara cakra* where it joins the rectum. Its main purpose is to expel faeces and urine and keep the body active and energetic.

3. **Vyana Vayu — Its function:**

   This pervades all parts of our body. It keeps the flesh, bone marrow and tissue and fat tissue in proper condition. It maintains the blood vessels and maintains proper blood circulation.

4. **Udana Vayu — Its function:**

   This *vayu* is situated in the throat. It removes diseases of *kapha dosha*, corrects the functioning of the vocal chords and gives a healthy plumpness to the body.

5. **Samana Vayu — Its function:**

   This is in the navel in the middle part of the body. Whatever and whenever we eat it pushes the food into the *jathara agni* and helps to digest it.

These five *vayus* are called by the alternate name **pancha prana** and are connected with the gross body. Through the many and powerful benefits of the *asana* and *pranayama* that we practise following the traditions of the *yoga sastra*, the *vayus* work to clean all the parts of their respective locations in the body as follows. The *prana vayu* exists in these places: the face, nostril, heart, navel, big toe; the *apana vayu* exists in these places: the *guhya*, the rectum and organs of generation, the genitals, thighs, stomach and hips; the *vyana vayu* exists in these places: the ear, neck, eye, *kapalam* (head) and *brahmarandhram* (top of skull); the *udana vayu* exists in the joints of the bones and meeting places of the nerves; the *samana vayu*, by the power of *jathara agni*, occupies all the moving parts of the body and cleanses these regions.

Naga vayu is in charge of belching; **Kurma vayu** is responsible for blinking; **Krkara vayu** is responsible for blowing the nose; **Devadatta vayu** is responsible for yawning; **Dhananjaya vayu** exists in all parts of the body and even after death is there for four *naazhigai* (a *naazhigai* is twenty-four minutes) — one knows this through experience.

Understand the relationship of these five *vayus* with the body and then practise yoga.

3.8 Section on the investigation of the twenty Mudras

After the *nadis* are cleaned by practising the *shatkriyas*, it is essential that everybody, respecting their body's constitution, practise at least some of the twenty *mudras* for the following reasons: in order to keep the ten types of *vayu* moving in their appropriate respective *nadis* and performing their assigned activities without obstruction (as described in the earlier section); in order to prevent diseases from forming in the body; for the *susumna nadi* to be taken to and maintained in the *brahmarandhram*; and for the always wavering gaze to stop moving and become focussed in one place. It is for this reason that the *mudras* are described here.

Mudras: There are twenty types of *mudras*: 1. *Maha Mudra*, 2. *Nabho Mudra*, 3. *Uddiyana Bandha Mudra*, 4. *Jalandhara Bandha Mudra*, 5. *Mulabandha Mudra*, 6. *Mahabandha Mudra*, 7. *Mahadeva Mudra*, 8. *Khecari Mudra*, 9. *Viparita Karani Mudra*, 10. *Yoni Mudra*, 11. *Vajroli Mudra*, 12. *Sakti Calana Mudra*, 13. *Tataka Mudra*, 14. *Manduka Mudra*, 15. *Sambavi Mudra*, 16. *Aswini Mudra*, 17. *Pasini Mudra*, 18. *Kaka Mudra*, 19. *Mathangi Mudra*, 20. *Bhujanga Mudra*

1. **Maha Mudra:** With the left foot pressed tightly against the rectum, extend the right leg out in front. Make sure that the heel is touching the floor and the toes are pointing upwards. Hold the big toe of the right foot with the fingers of the right hand. Keep the chin firmly pressed against the chest and keep the gaze fixed on the midbrow. Similarly, following the instructions mentioned above, repeat the *mudra* with the right foot pressed firmly against the rectum and the left leg extended forward.

   Benefit: Tuberculosis (consumption of lungs), asthma, coughing and breath diseases, obstruction of bowels, diseases of the spleen, indigestion, such diseases of *vayu* will be removed.

2. **Nabho Mudra:** Fold the tongue up to the upper palate with the tip of the tongue touching the root or base of inner tongue. Pull the breath in and hold it inside as long as possible. The *yogabhyasi* can follow this practice always and anywhere, irrespective of time and place, no matter what activity he is involved in.

Benefit: It will remove weakness of the body and give proper strength to the practitioner.

3. **Uddiyanabandha Mudra:** Draw in the navel in such a way as to press against the bones of the back (spine) with the abdomen firmly pulled in.

   Benefit: *Prana vayu* will be directed towards the path of the *susumna nadi* and this will help the practitioner overcome death.

4. **Jalandhara Bandha Mudra:** Take the chin four *angulas* below the neck, press it firmly against the chest and maintain this position.

   Benefit: Cleans all the *nadis* and *cakras* located in the following regions: the four big toes and fingers, the top of the heel, the knees, the thighs, the genitals, the navel, the chest, the neck, the midbrow, the head, and the *brahmarandhram*. It also awakens the *kundalini*.

5. **Mulabandha Mudra:** With the left heel, firmly press the *kandasthana* which is between the rectum and the genitals and pull the heel in tightly in order to close the anus. Pull in the stomach firmly and press it against the bones in the back (the spine). Bring in the right heel and place it on top of the genitals. This is in *hatha yoga*.

   Benefit: Because of this, we can conquer the *prana vayu* and bring it under our control.

6. **Mahabandha Mudra:** Firmly press the left heel into the *kandasthana*. Place the right foot over that and stay in *kumbhaka*.

   Benefit: When you do this, all the *nadis* in the body turn upward and the *ida*, the *pingala*, and the *susumna nadis* join in the midbrow. This will overcome death and protect the body.

7. **Mahadeva Mudra:** Sit in *mula bandha mudra* and do *kumbhaka* in *uddiyana bandha*.

   Benefit: This will increase the *jathara agni* and you will get the *animadi guna siddhi* — one of the eight *siddhis* which is the quality of becoming as minute as an atom. This belongs to *raja yoga*.

8. **Khecari Mudra:** After first learning the *yoga marmas* with the help of a satguru who is still practising this, cut 1/12 of one angula measure (width of one hair) of the thin seed of skin at the bottom of the tongue with a sharp knife. Apply a well-powdered paste of *sainthava lavanam* salt (rock salt) on the area of the cut. Rub cow's butter on both sides of the tongue, and holding the tip of the tongue with a small iron tong, pull the tongue out carefully, little by little. Repeat this (the pulling) every day. Once a week, as mentioned above, cut the seed of flesh at the base of the tongue very carefully. Practise this for three years. The tongue will lengthen and will easily be able to touch the middle of the eyebrows. After it lengthens this much, fold it inside the mouth, keep it in the cavity which is alongside the base of the inner tongue and fix the gaze on the mid-brow.

   Benefit: Hunger and thirst subside without loss of body strength and without allowing room in the body for any disease. If practised daily, the body develops a lustre in a few days and one quickly reaches the state of *samadhi* and drinks the divine nectar. This belongs to *hatha yoga*.

9. **Viparita Karani Mudra:** Keeping the head on the ground, lift the legs up and hold the entire body straight without bending or curving the body in any direction. This is *raja yoga*.

   Benefit: Activates the *surya nadi* that is in the navel so that it is present in the upper part, and the *chandra nadi* which is beneath the tongue so that it occupies the lower part; it overcomes birth and death. Even during the *pralaya*, the body will remain steady.

10. **Yoni Mudra:** Sit in *siddhasana*. Carefully close the ears with the two thumbs, the eyes with the two index fingers, the nostrils with the two middle fingers, the upper lip with the two ring fingers and the lower lip with the two little fingers. Suck in the *prana vayu* (outside air) by doing *kaka mudra* and joining the *prana vayu* with the *apana vayu*, practise *kumbhaka* and maintain this position.

    Benefit: All the five great sins are removed and it will quickly bring about a state of *samadhi*.

11. (a) **Vajroli Mudra: Form 1:** Using both hands, raise the body placing the entire body weight on the hands without allowing the head

to touch the ground. Keeping the head this way, hold the body as in *viparita karani mudra* and do *kumbhaka*. This is *raja yoga*.

(b) **Vajroli Mudra: Form 2:** Take a 12 *angula* long thin glass pipette or lead pipe and through the genital opening insert it and remove it daily, increasing the amount of insertion by one *angula* each day. After you are able to practise inserting the pipe for a length of twelve *angulas*, draw in the outside air through such an opening in the genitals. After practising this, eventually draw in milk and then water and then push them out of the body. This is *hatha yoga*.

Benefit: This is for people with excessive sexual activity, and who through heat have lost *viryam* (sexual potency). It is for diabetic diseases and for those with seminal and vaginal discharges. This will correct the *viryam* and give good body strength. As long as the *viryam* is not lost, disease, old age and death will be held away.

12. **Sakti Calana Mudra:** Sit in *padmasana* and keep the nostrils firmly closed. Hold the *prana vayu* in the stomach, do *kumbhaka*, and through *uddiyana bandha mudra* compress the *prana vayu*. The 72000 *nadis* will move to the *muladhara cakra* in the *kandasthana* and awaken the sleeping *kundalini* which, without moving elsewhere in the body, will occupy the middle of the path of the *susumna*. Such a *kumbhaka* is called *sakti calana mudra*.

    Benefit: It will quickly facilitate control of the *prana* and lead to *samadhi siddhi*.

13. **Tataka Mudra:** Sit in *pascimottanasana* and push the stomach forward. This is *raja yoga*.

14. **Manduka Mudra:** Keep the mouth closed and fold the tip of the tongue up to the top palate and after this keep moving it this way and that. Catch the nectar dripping from the upper part of the root of the tongue and swallow it. This is *hatha yoga*.

    Benefit: This will not allow any disease to approach. It will prevent aging, will not allow greying of hair, and will protect the body.

15. **Sambhavi Mudra:** Due to the strength of the *traataka abhyasa* mentioned in the *shatkriyas*, after the eyes have teared profusely, fix the gaze on the mid-brow.

    Benefit: This gives rise to *ekagrata citta* and gives *dhyana siddhi*. This is *raja yoga*.

16. **Aswini Mudra:** Repeatedly close and open the anal opening many times.

    Benefit: Cures diseases of the rectum, will render physical strength and sharpness of the intellect, awakens the power of *kundalini* and conquers untimely death. This is *raja yoga*.

17. **Pasini Mudra:** Take the two legs and place them behind the neck. Extend the arms, and with the support of the outstretched hands placed on the ground, raise the body.

    Benefit: *Kundalini* being kindled nourishes the body. This is *hatha yoga*.

18. **Kaka Mudra:** Hold the mouth like a crow's beak and inhale and pull in the outside air into the stomach.

    Benefit: All diseases will be eliminated and you will have a long life like a crow. This is *hatha yoga*.

19. **Mathangini Mudra:** Stand in water up to the neck. Through the nostrils, draw in water and spit it out through the mouth. Then take in water through the mouth and expel it out through the nose. This is *raja yoga*.

    Benefit: Practise this every day many times in the same place as described above. You will become strong like an elephant, you will not get any diseases and will conquer untimely death.

20. **Bhujangini Mudra:** Stay in *bhujangasana*, stretch the neck out in front and according to *vata sara krama*, pull in the outside air and do *puraka kumbhaka*.

    Benefit: This will remove diseases like indigestion, *agni mandam* (low *agni*), stop stomach pain and leave you happy. This is *raja yoga*.

Announcement

If one practises these twenty mudras according to one's strength and capability, then diseases associated with *svasam* (respiration), *kasam* (coughing), spleen, *meham* (bladder) — such 84,000 diseases can be prevented. One develops extraordinary physical strength and will not fall victim to an untimely death. Moreover, the *prana vayu* will join the *susumna nadi* and one develops one-pointedness of the gaze and of the mind. Therefore, these *mudras* have to be achieved before practising *pranayama*.

Chapter 4

Chapter on Asana

1 Uttanasana (Figure 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7)

Following the rules for *tadasana* (*yogasana samasthiti krama*) (Figure 4.1, 4.2), stand erect. Afterwards, while exhaling the breath out slowly, bend the upper part of the body (that is, the part above the hip) little by little and place the palms down by the legs. The knees must not be even slightly bent. Raise the head upwards and fix the gaze on the tip of the nose. While doing this, draw in clean air through the nostril, hold the breath firmly and maintain this position. This is called *sahitha kumbhaka*. After remaining here for some time, exhale the breath (that was being held) out very slowly through the nostril, lower the head and place it on the knees. Do not inhale at this stage. Draw the breath in while raising the head and exhale the breath out while lowering the head — this must be practised according to one's strength and capability. In this position, while the head is raised and while it is lowered and placed onto the knee, the palms must be firmly pressed against the ground. This *sthiti* is called *uttanasana*. Initially, when one remains in this *sthiti*, there might be an occurence of tremors in the arms and legs. At these times, if one holds the breath firmly and stands, these tremors will not occur. After remaining in this *sthiti* for some time, return to *tadasana sthiti*.

There are 8 forms of *uttanasana*. As a result of practising these 8 forms, all the various diseases of the lower abdomen will be removed and the digestive power will increase. Even ordinary stomach pain will stop. Women may also practise this *asana*. But this *asana* must not be done during pregnancy. This is the first form. There are 3 *vinyasas* for this.

The procedure for **Padahastasana** and other different forms of *uttanasana*: —

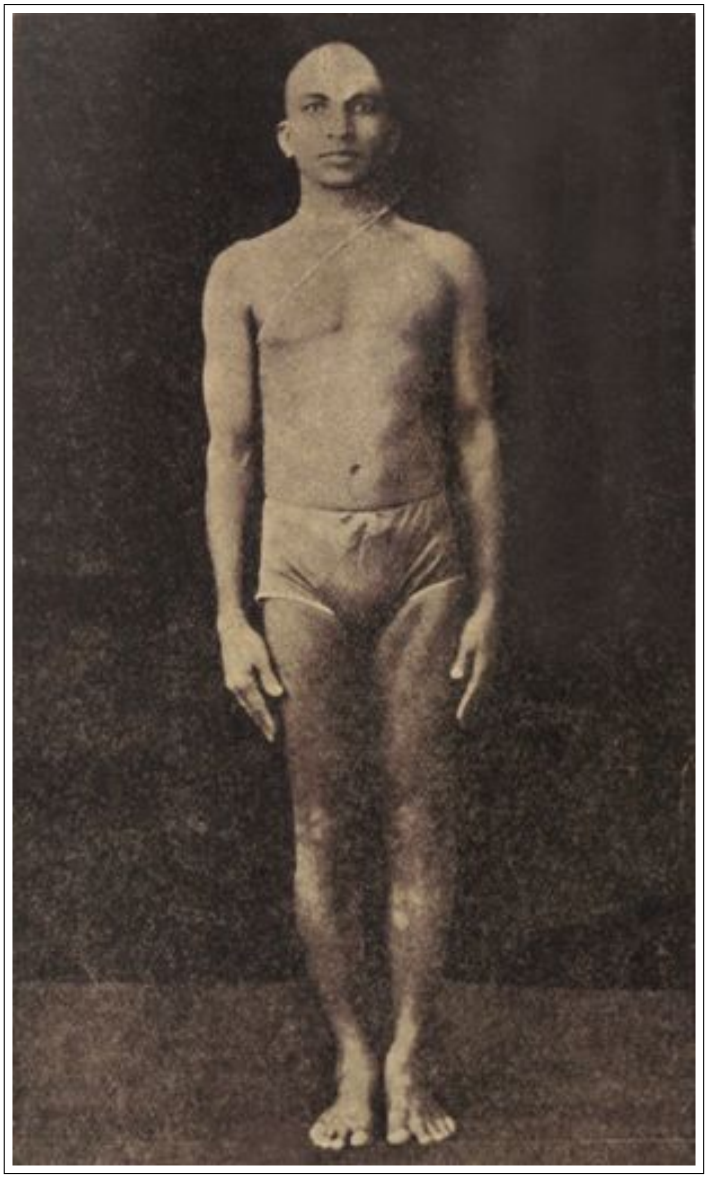


Figure 4.1: Yogasana Samasthiti Kramam

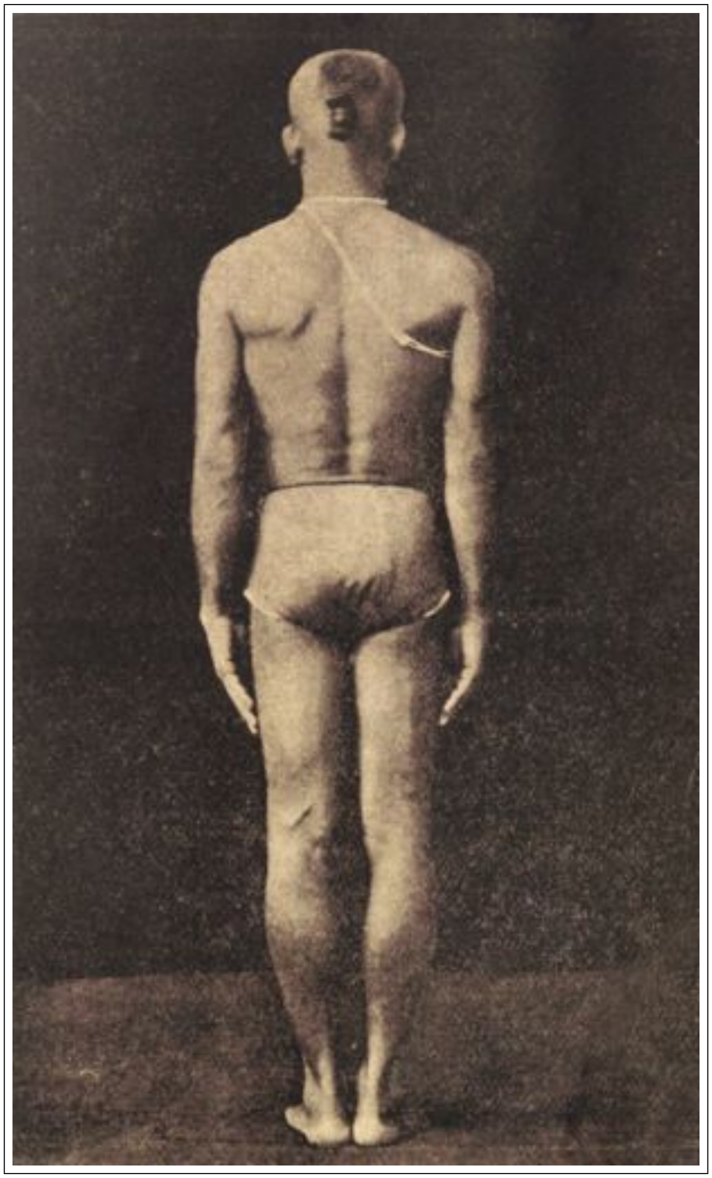


Figure 4.2: Yogasana: Picture from Behind

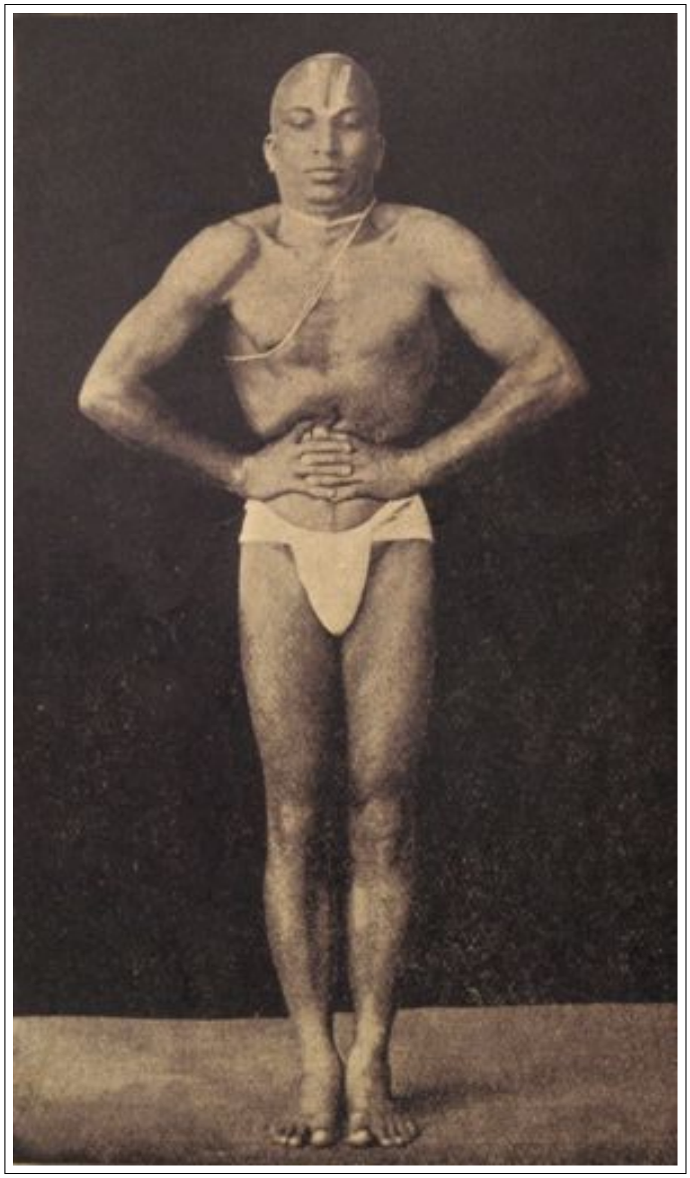


Figure 4.3: Sthiti after practising Dhauti

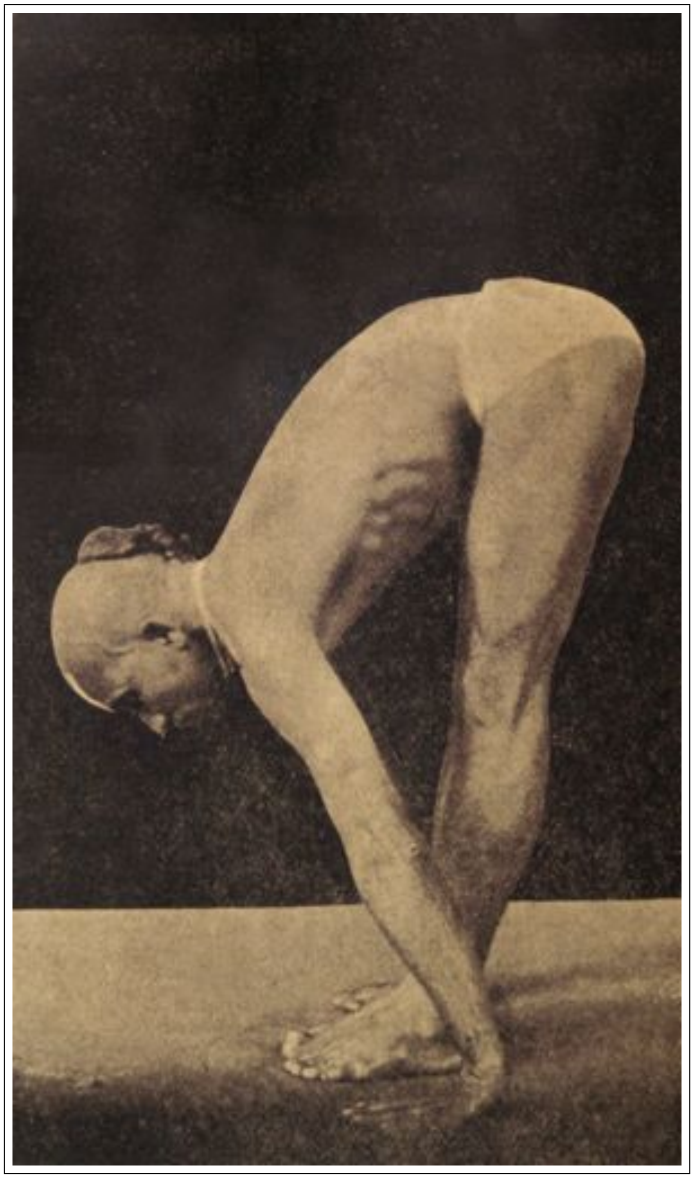


Figure 4.4: Uttanasana Sthiti

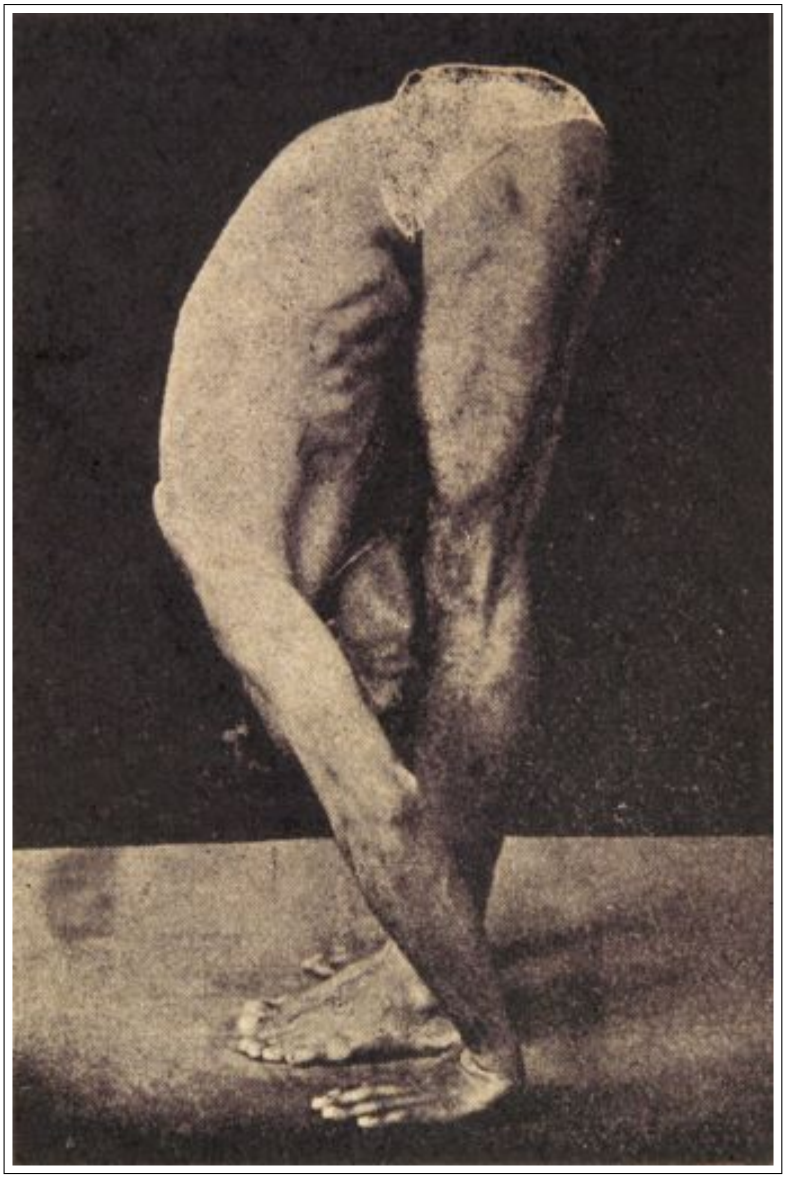


Figure 4.5: Adhomukha Uttanasana

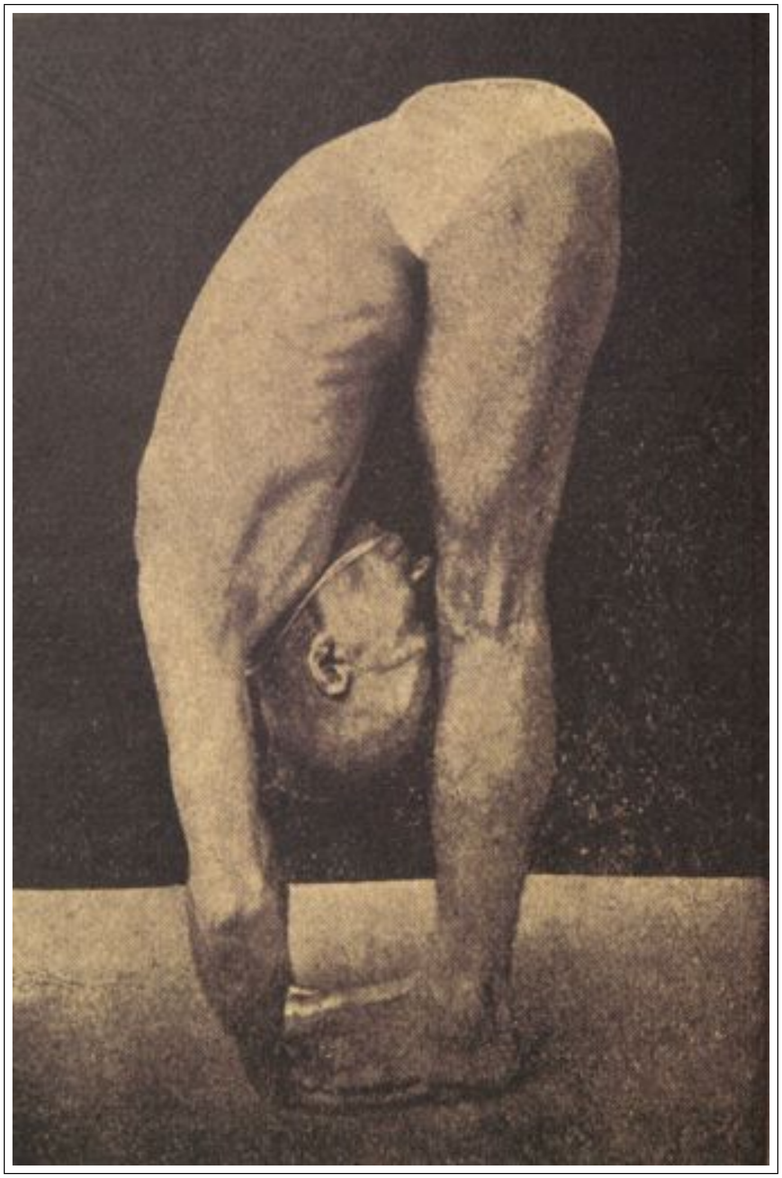


Figure 4.6: Hasta Padottanasana

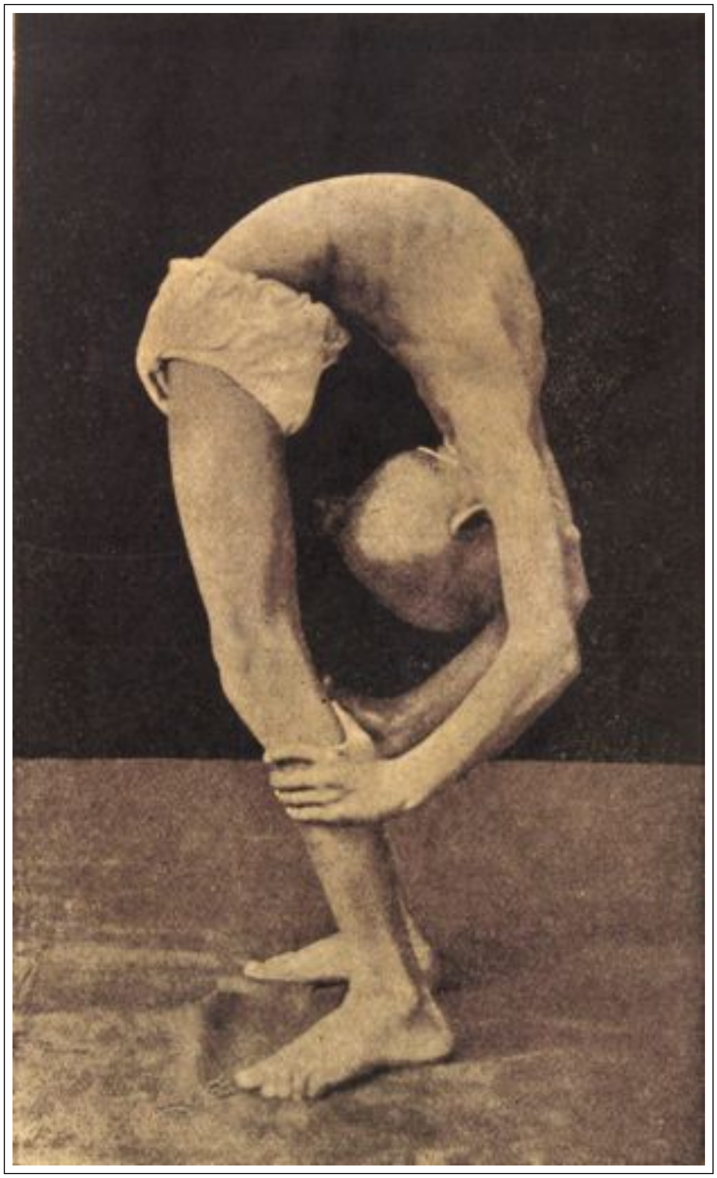


Figure 4.7: Tiryangamukha Uttanasana

Hold the big toes of the feet with the first three fingers of each hand. Exhale the breath, remain in the same *sthiti* and bring both ears between the two arms while lowering the head. This is called **cakrasana**. Take the hands behind the back, bend the body backwards as well and then do *uttanasana*. There are special benefits for this. But practise only according to your physical condition and capacity. Hold the big toe of the right foot with the left hand and the big toe of the left foot with the right hand and lower the head and place it between the knees. This position, if it is maintained, is one form of *padahastasana*.

Keeping the legs spread as far apart as possible, hold the big toe of the right foot with the fingers of the left hand and the big toe of the left foot with the fingers of the right hand, as described above. Lower the head and place it between both legs making sure that it is aligned properly. This is also a form of *padahastasana*.

While practising the following *asanas* and other related *asanas*, the knees must remain straight and should not be even slightly bent: *Uttanasana*, *pascimottanasana*, *hasta padasana*, *janusirsasana*, *ardhabaddha padmottanasana*, *upavishtakonasana*, *supta konasana*, *viparita konasana*, *urdhva prasarana padasana*, *halasana*, *sirsasana*, *sarvangasana*, and *padahastasana*. This important rule must never be forgotten.

After first practising all the parts of *padahastasana* properly, as described above, practise *uttanasana*.

In another form, bend forward to the extent possible and place the face 9 *angulas* below the kneecap. That is, the *asana* must be done such that the head is placed exactly halfway between the knees and feet. After this, even here, place the head between the legs. This is another form of *uttanasana*.

2 Parsvottanasana (Figure 4.8, 4.9)

Standing in *tadasana krama*, draw in clean air through the nose and practise *kumbhaka*. Spread the legs such that the feet are at a distance of two and a half *mozhams* apart and clasp the hands together behind the back. Slowly exhale the breath, turn and bend towards the side of the left leg and place your face on top of the left kneecap. At this time, both legs should be held straight and should not bend in any direction. After remaining in this position for a period of time, slowly inhale the breath in through the nose while raising the head slightly. Straighten the body, stand erect and after returning to the initial position, turn to the right side. After turning, first stand for one minute and then bend down to the right side. While lowering the upper body to the right side, exhale through the nose as you did before and firmly place the lowered head on top of the right kneecap. As mentioned above, both legs must be held straight and should not

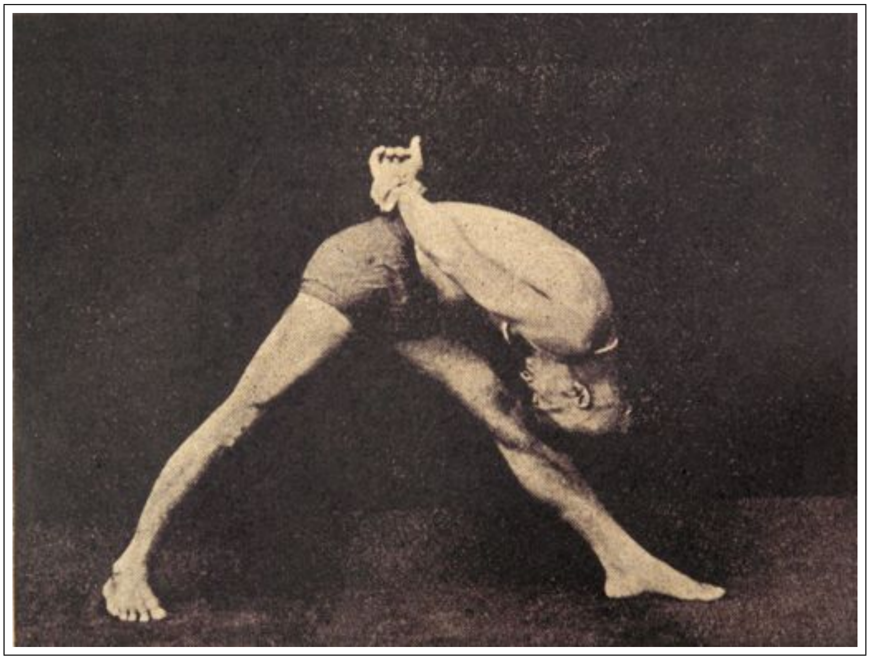


Figure 4.8: Parsvottanasana - Left

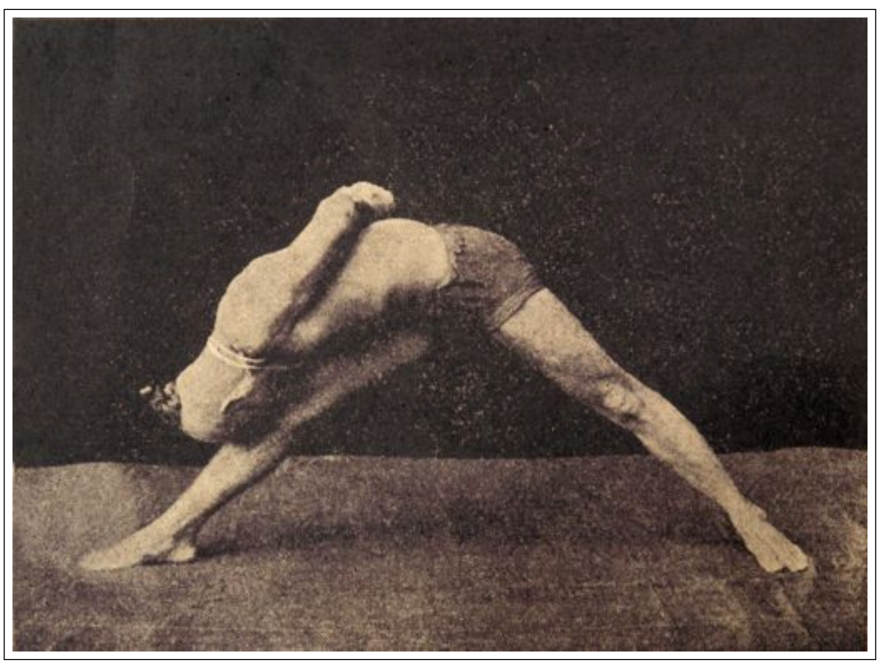


Figure 4.9: Parsvottanasana - Right

be even slightly bent. As you keep practising on both sides, it will eventually become possible to place the head 4 *angulas* below the knee. Afterwards, as mentioned above, slowly raise the head while you inhale the breath in through the nostril and straighten up. After standing upright, jump and come to *tadasana sthiti*. This *parsva uttanasana* can be done by both men and women. (It has 5 *vinyasas*).

3 Prasarita Padottanasana (Figure 4.10)

Stand in *tadasana krama*. Jump the legs apart, placing the feet 3 *mozhams* apart on the ground. Practise jumping and placing the feet at the correct distance all in one jump. While jumping, either *puraka kumbhaka* or *recaka kumbhaka* can be done. There should be no noise while jumping and pressing the feet onto the floor. Now raise the arms and slowly exhale through the nose. While doing *recaka*, bend forward and lower the upper part of the body (above the hips) down towards the ground. Take the hands between the legs and moving them back step-by-step, place the palms on the ground. Lower the head down between the hands. At this time, the legs should not be even slightly bent. After remaining in this position for some time, raise the head, draw in clean air through the nose and slowly raise the body. After standing up, jump back to *tadasana*. This *asana* should not be practised by women after beginning menstruation. In the same way, follow the rules while practising the various forms of *uttanasana*. (This has 5 *vinyasas*).

4 Ardhabaddha Padmottanasana (Figure 4.11, 4.12, 4.13, 4.14)

From *tadasana*, do *puraka kumbhaka*. After this, choose either leg and place its foot on top of the opposite thigh. Slowly, little by little, move the foot up until the back of the heel is pressed against the lower abdomen. Whichever leg is raised, move the same hand behind the back and clasp the big toe of that foot (from behind the back). Keep the other hand in *tadasana sthiti* and do *puraka kumbhaka*. After this, slowly exhale through the nose and bend the upper part of the body forward down to the floor. Place the palm down by the foot and keep it firmly pressed against the floor. Release the breath out completely, and without inhaling, practise *kumbhaka* and lower the head, placing it on top of the kneecap of the extended leg. Repeat this from the beginning with the other leg following all the instructions mentioned earlier. This has 10 *vinyasas*.

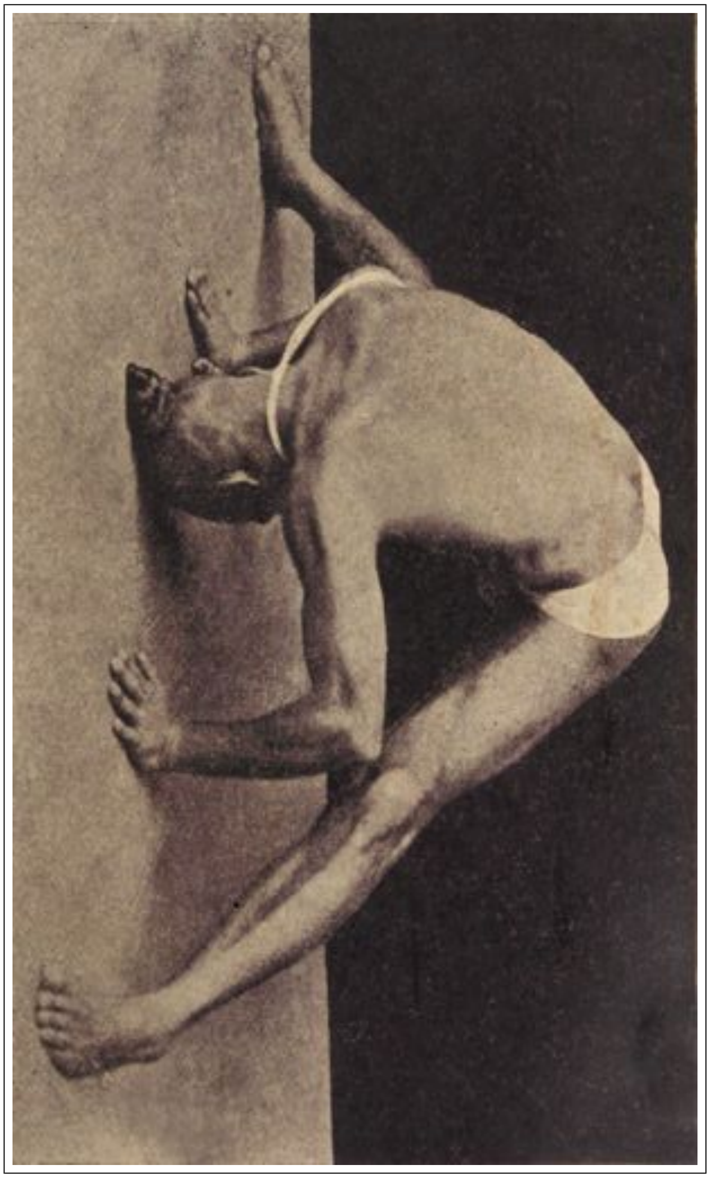


Figure 4.10: Prasarita Padottanasana



Figure 4.11: Vamardhabaddha Padmottanasana Sthiti

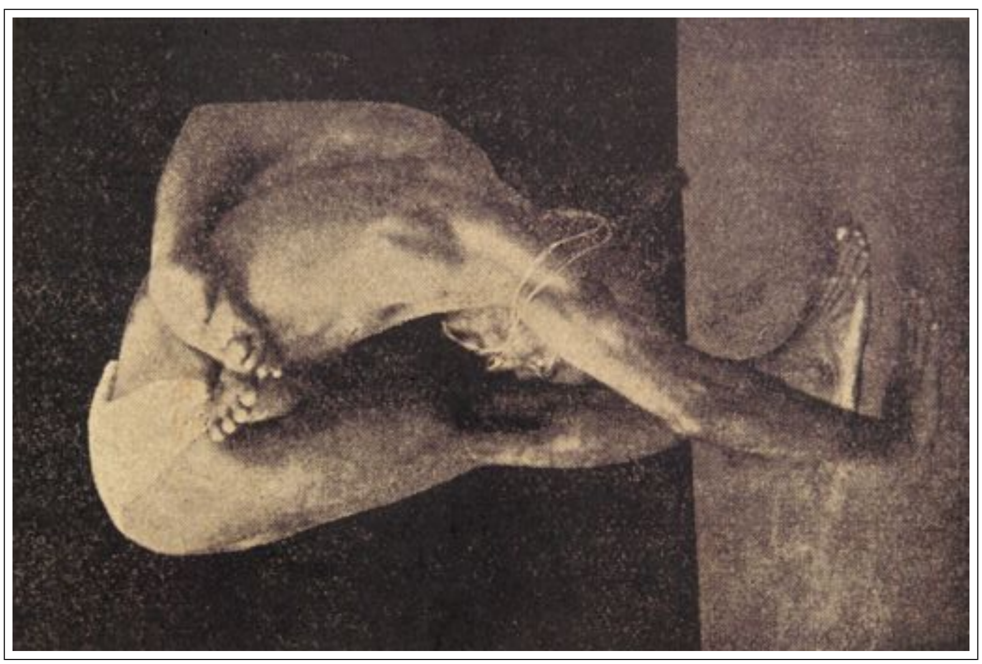


Figure 4.12: Vamardhabaddha Padmottanasana

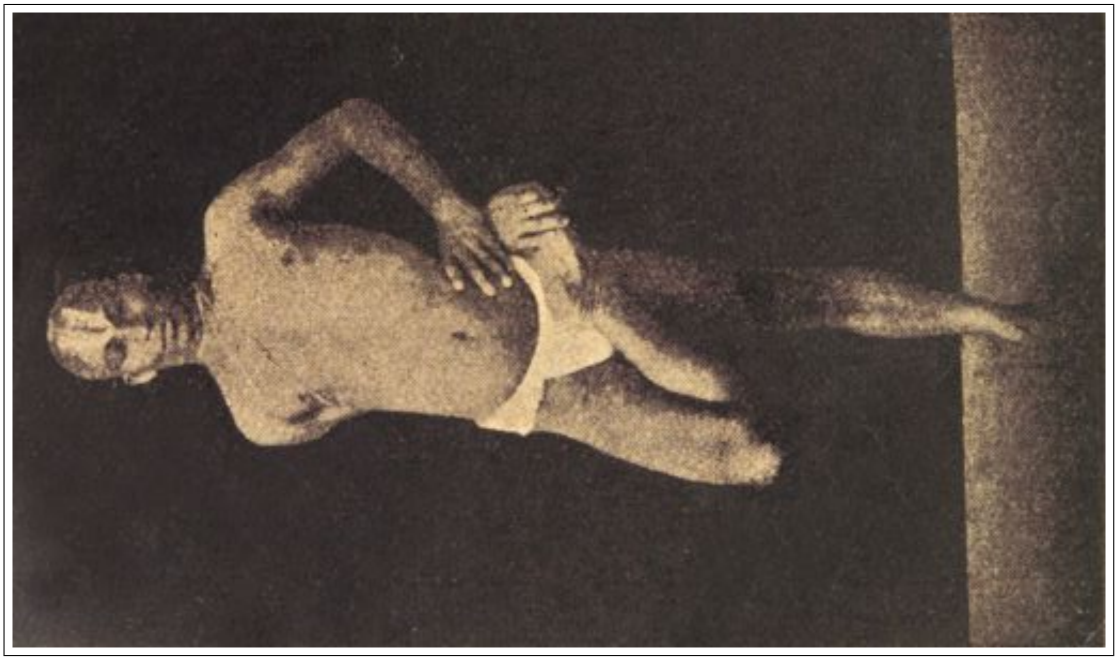


Figure 4.13: Dakshinardhabaddha Padmottanasana Sthiti



Figure 4.14: Dakshinardhabaddha Padmottanasana

Benefit: This removes all the impurities and deposits from all sides of the lower abdomen and expels them out through the anus. It strengthens the digestive power daily.

5 Caturanga Dandasana (Figure 4.15, 4.16)

For this, there are 4 *vinyasas*. *Vinyasas* 1, 2, and 3 are as for *uttanasana*. The 4th *vinyasa* alone is different. Press both palms down firmly while doing the 4th *vinyasa* from the 3rd *vinyasa* of *uttanasana*. Do only *recaka* and firmly hold the breath out without doing *puraka*. Keeping the weight balanced equally on both legs, jump backwards (keeping both legs parallel to each other) and holding the body straight like a rod, lie down facing downwards. At this time, only the palms and toes touch the ground. No other parts of the body touch the ground. That is, there must be 4 *angulas* of space between the body and the ground. In this position, if you keep a stick or rod on top of the body, the rod must touch the body completely. We need to keep our body this straight. But make sure to check gaps formed by the muscles and mounds of flesh to determine if all the adjustments are correct.

Benefit: All the impurities and deposits of flesh residing at all the joints of the bones and the meeting places of the nerves are quickly expelled out of the body. Remain in this *sthiti* for at least ten minutes and then return to *samasthiti*.

6 Urdhvamukhasvanasana (Figure 4.17)

This has 4 *vinyasas*. *Vinyasas* 1, 2, and 3 are exactly as for *uttanasana*. The 4th *vinyasa* is to be done following the same method as for *caturanga dandasana*. But in *caturanga dandasana*, there are 4 *angulas* of space between the body and the floor everywhere. In this *asana*, the palms and toes are as in *caturanga dandasana*. However even while keeping the lower part of the body from the toes to the thighs just as in *caturanga dandasana*, raise the upper part of the body. Make sure that the navel rests between the hands and do *puraka kumbhaka*. Try to push the chest as far forward as possible, lift the face up and keep gazing at the tip of the nose. Make the effort to practise until it becomes possible to remain in this posture for fifteen minutes.

Benefit: There will be no slouching in the body. The *apana vayu* in the lower abdomen is cleaned and the digestive power is strengthened. The 4th *vinyasa* itself is the *asana sthiti*. Afterward, return to *samasthiti*. Study the picture given here carefully.

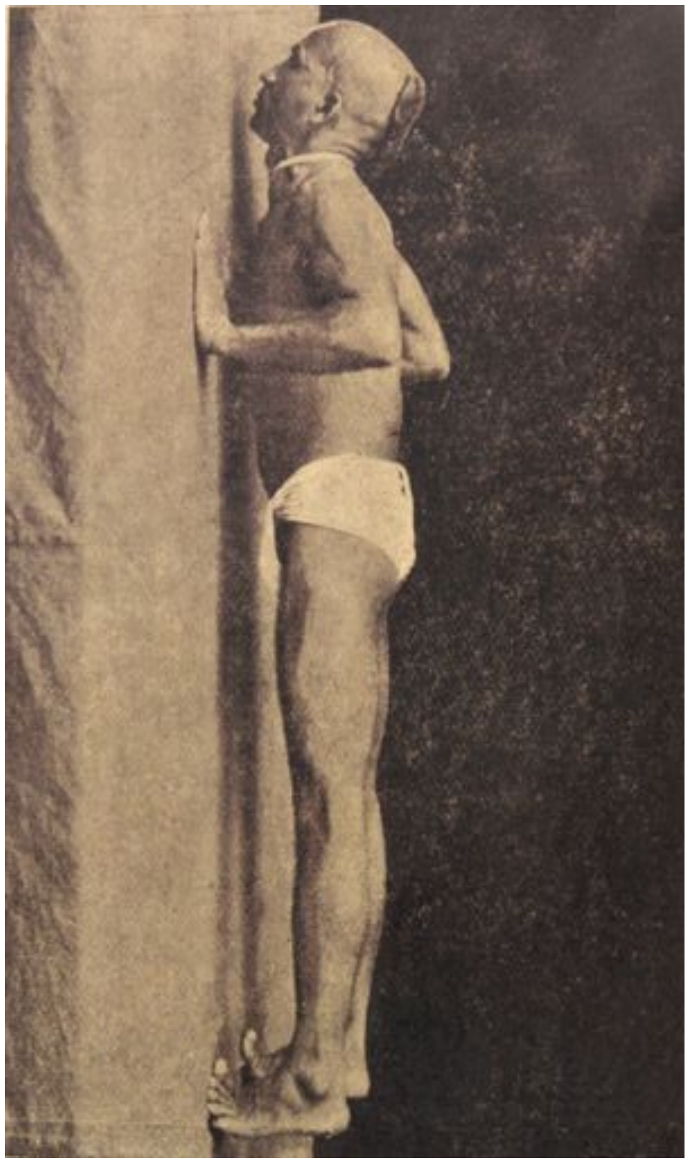


Figure 4.15: Caturanga Dandasana 1.

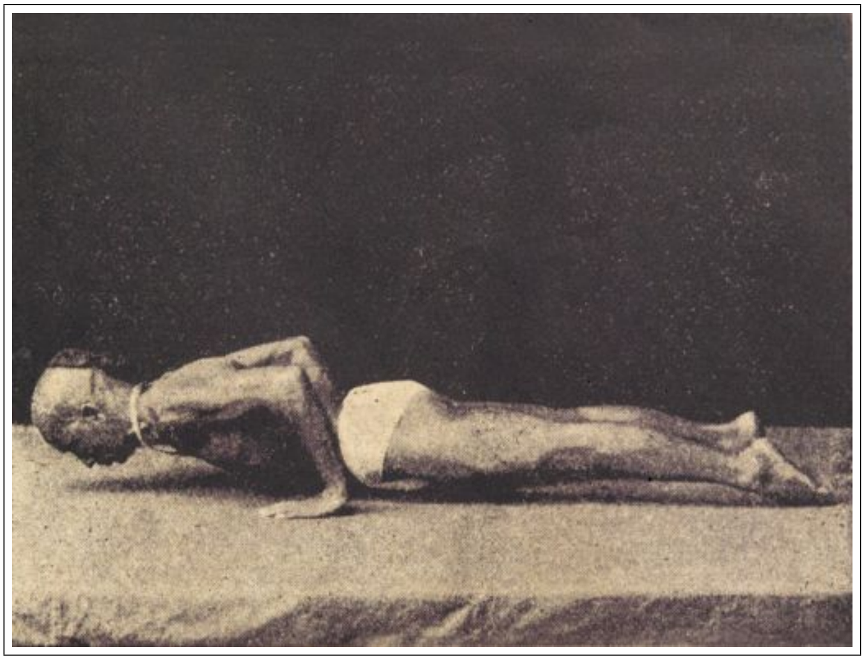


Figure 4.16: Caturanga Dandasana 2.

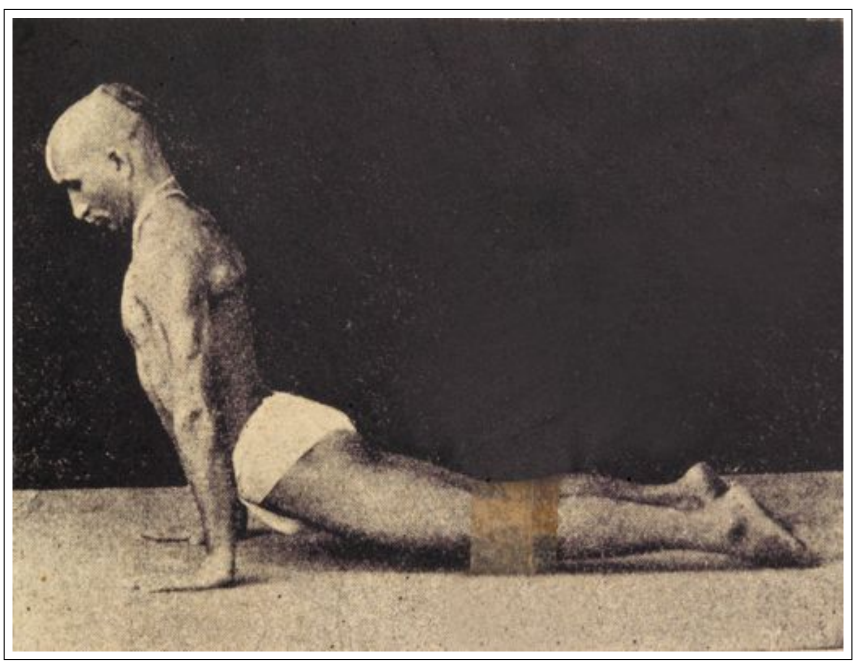


Figure 4.17: Urdhvamukhasvanasana

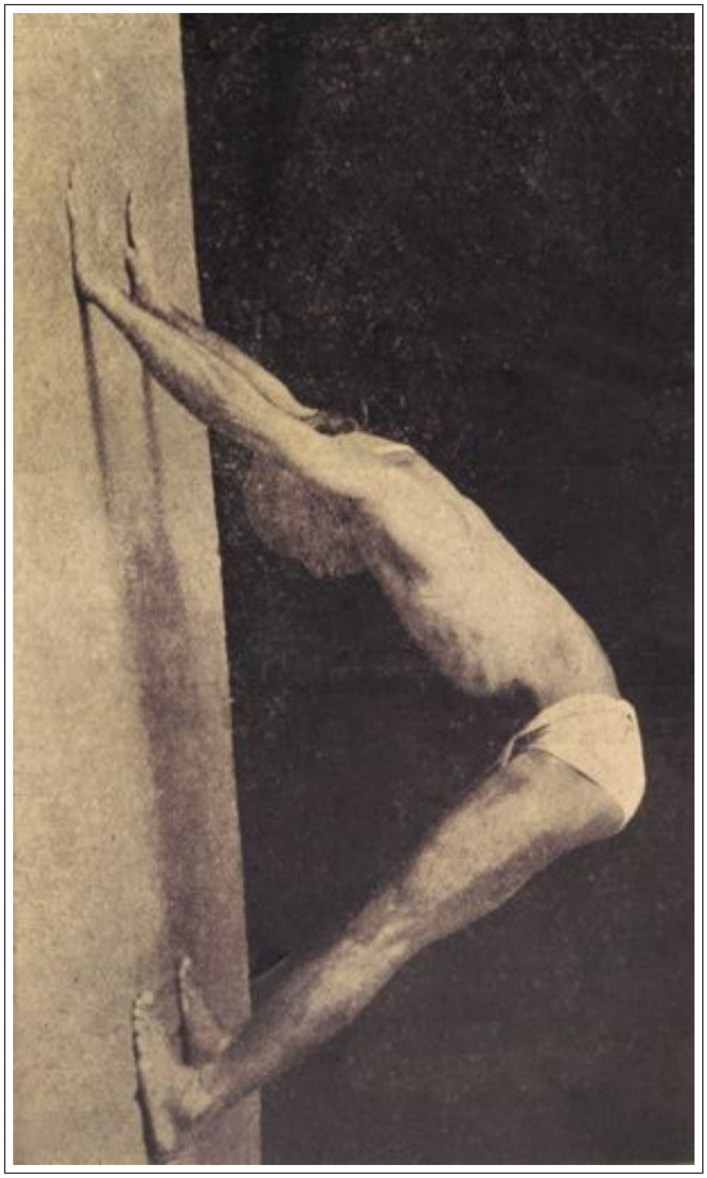


Figure 4.18: Adhomukhasvanasana

7 Adhomukhasvanasana (Figure 4.18)

For this, there are 4 *vinyasas*. *Vinyasas* 1, 2, and 3 are exactly as for *uttanasana*. In the 4th *vinyasa* only, even while jumping back as for *caturanga dandasana*, the entire body should be pushed back into a curve. Study the picture and learn this. In this *sthiti*, the head should be properly bent inwards and the chin should be pressed firmly against the chest. After pulling the abdomen in and pushing it out, exhale the breath out. Holding the breath out firmly, pull in the abdomen. As a result of the strength of practice, one learns to hold this posture for fifteen minutes.

Benefit: Bloating of stomach, bad belching, *ajeerna vayu*, all such diseases will go away. The 4th *vinyasa* itself is the *asana sthiti*. Because of the strength of *recaka*, you will receive best results by practising this *asana* in *recaka*.

8 Pascimattanasana or Pascimottanasana (Figure 4.19 — 4.28)

This *asana* has many *kramas*. Of these the first form has 16 *vinyasas*. Just doing the *asana sthiti* by sitting in the same spot without doing these *vinyasas* will not yield the complete benefits mentioned in the *yoga sastras*. This rule applies to all *asanas*.

The first three *vinyasas* are exactly as for *uttanasana*. The 4th *vinyasa* is *caturanga dandasana*, the 5th *vinyasa* is *urdhvamukhasvanasana*, the 6th *vinyasa* is *adhomukhasvanasana*. Practise these following the earlier instructions. In the 6th *vinyasa*, doing *puraka kumbhaka*, jump and arrive at the 7th *vinyasa*. That is, from *adhomukhasvanasana sthiti*, jump forward and move both legs between the arms without allowing the legs to touch the floor. Extend the legs out forward and sit down. Practise sitting like this with the rear part of the body either between the two hands or 4 *angulas* in front of the hands. It is better to learn the *abhyasa krama* from a guru. In this *sthiti*, push the chest forward, do *puraka kumbhaka* and gaze steadily at the tip of the nose. After this extend both arms out towards the feet (the legs are already extended in front). Clasp the big toes of the feet tightly with the first three fingers (thumb, index, middle) of the hands such that the left hand holds the left big toe and the right hand holds the right big toe. Do not raise the knees even slightly. Then, pull in the stomach while doing *recaka*, lower the head and press the face down onto the knee. The knees should not rise from the ground in this *sthiti* either. This is the 9th *vinyasa*. This is called *pascimottanasana*. In the beginning, everybody will find it very difficult. The nerves in the back, the thighs and the backs of the knees will feel as though

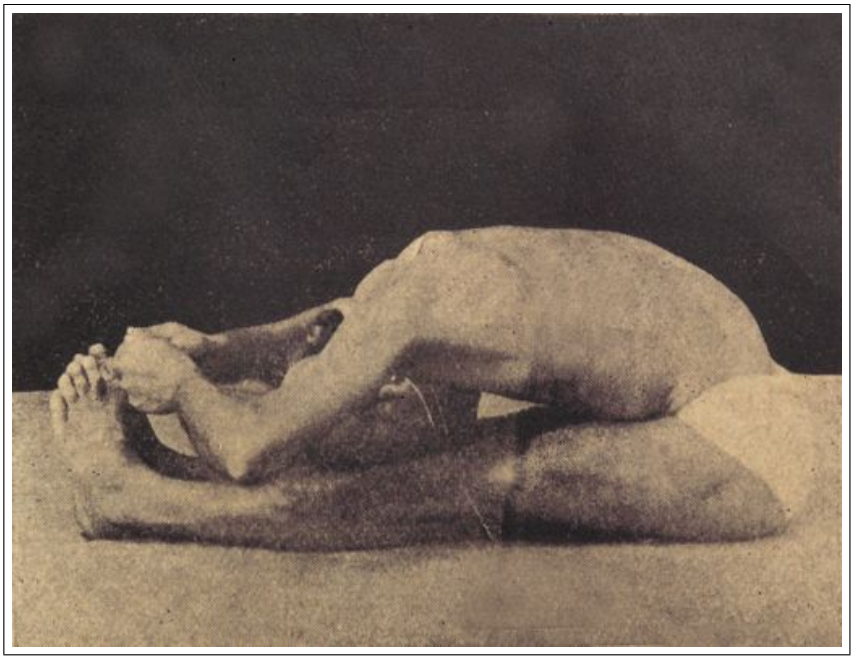


Figure 4.19: Adhomukha Pascimottanasana 1.

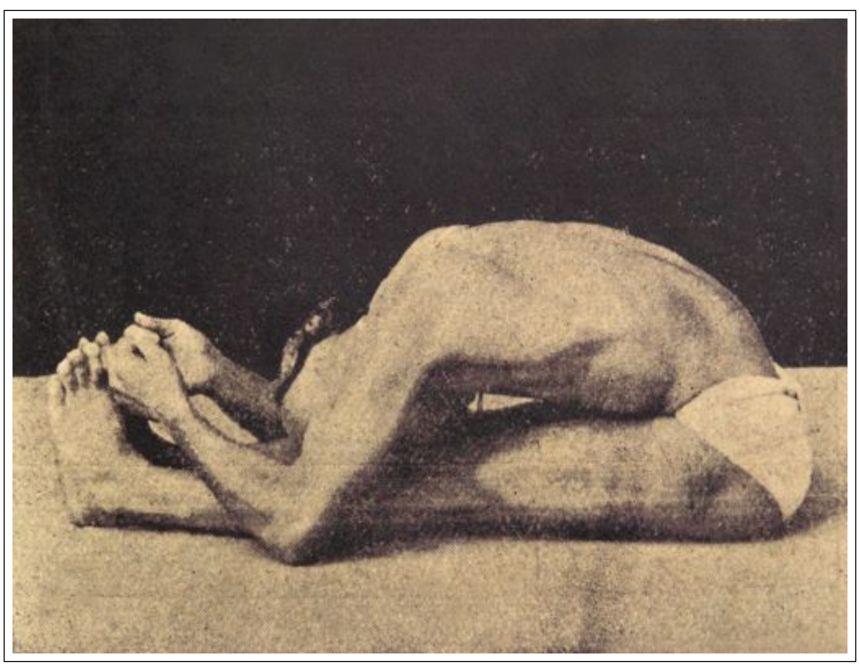


Figure 4.20: Adhomukha Pascimottanasana 2.

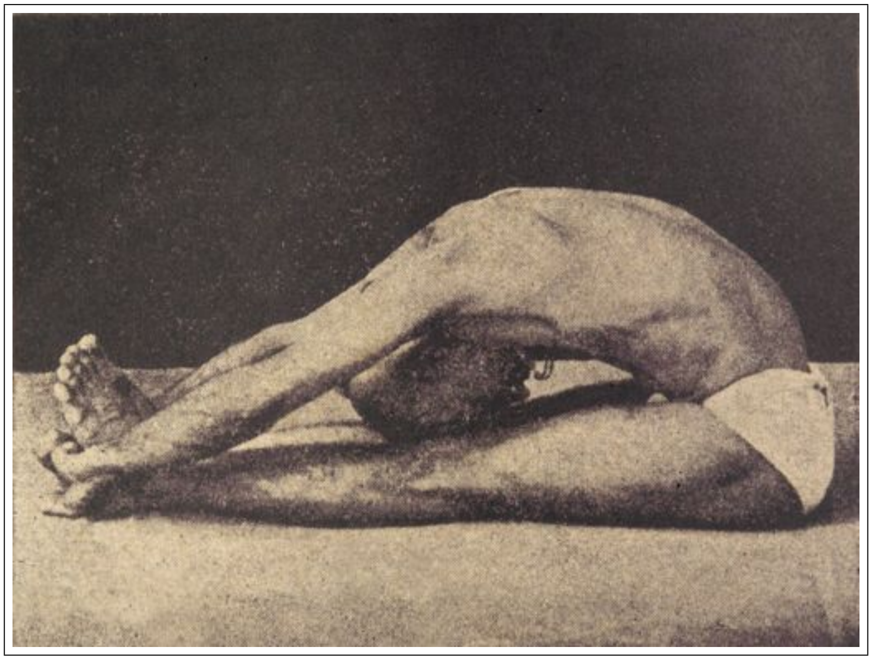


Figure 4.21: Adhomukha Pascimottanasana 3.

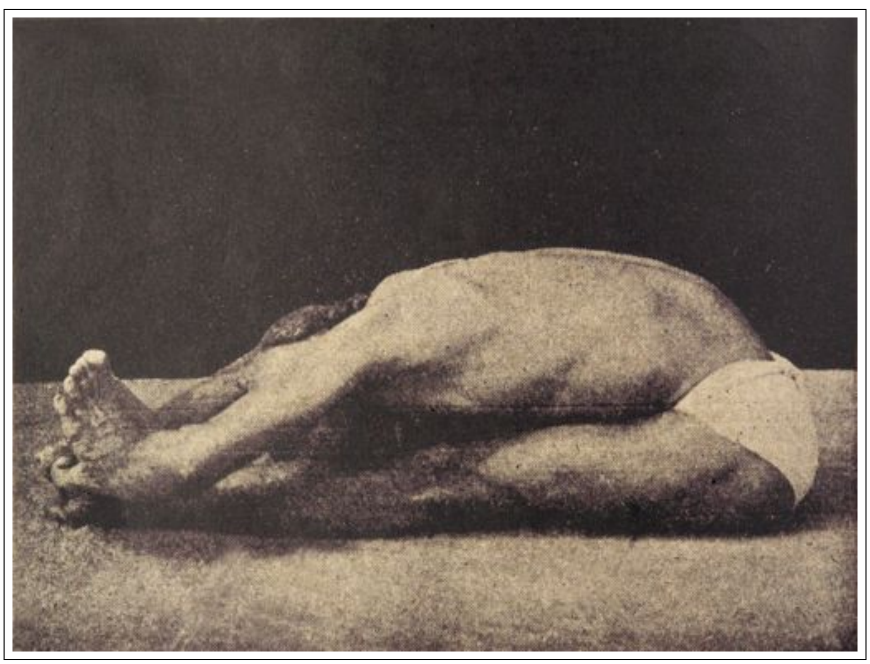


Figure 4.22: Adhomukha Pascimottanasana 4.

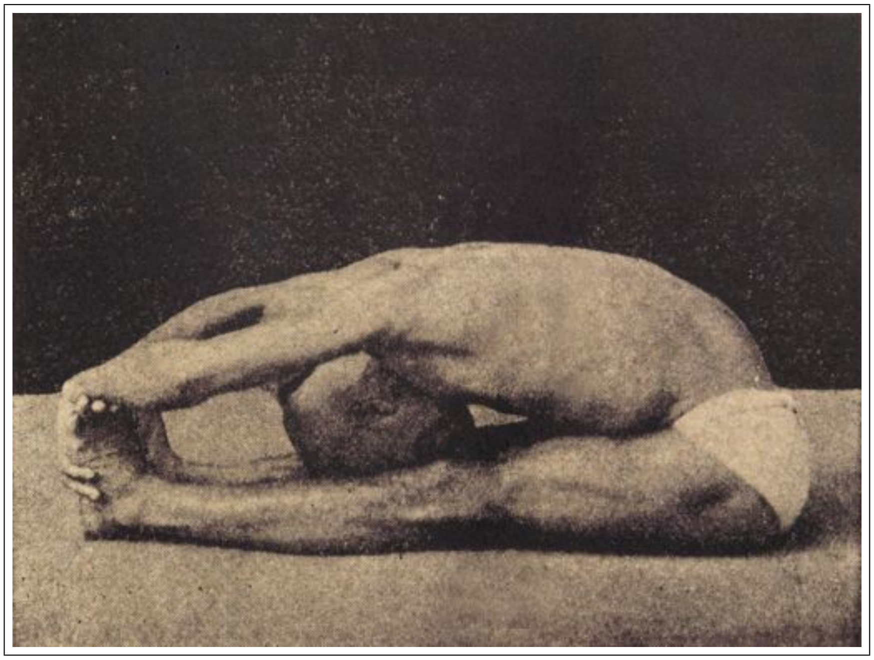


Figure 4.23: Adhomukha Pascimottanasana 5.

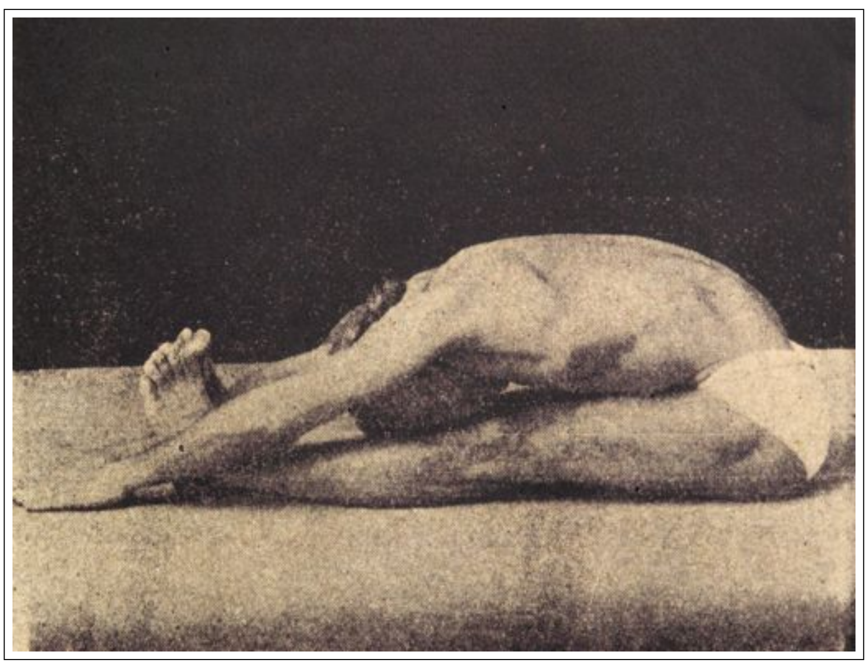


Figure 4.24: Adhomukha Pascimottanasana 6.

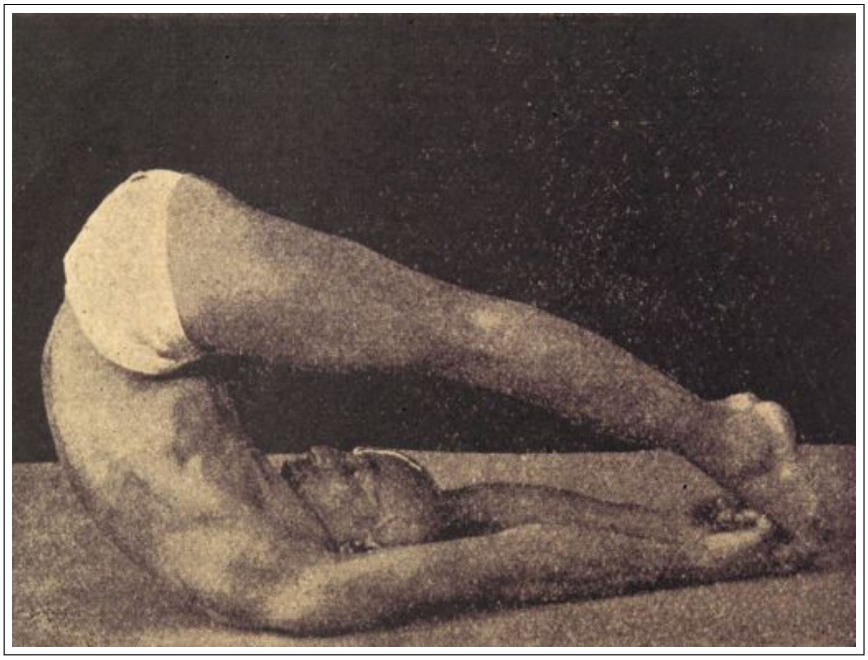


Figure 4.25: Urdhvamukha Pascimottanasana 1.



Figure 4.26: Urdhvamukha Pascimottanasana 2.



Figure 4.27: Urdhvamukha Pascimottanasana 3.

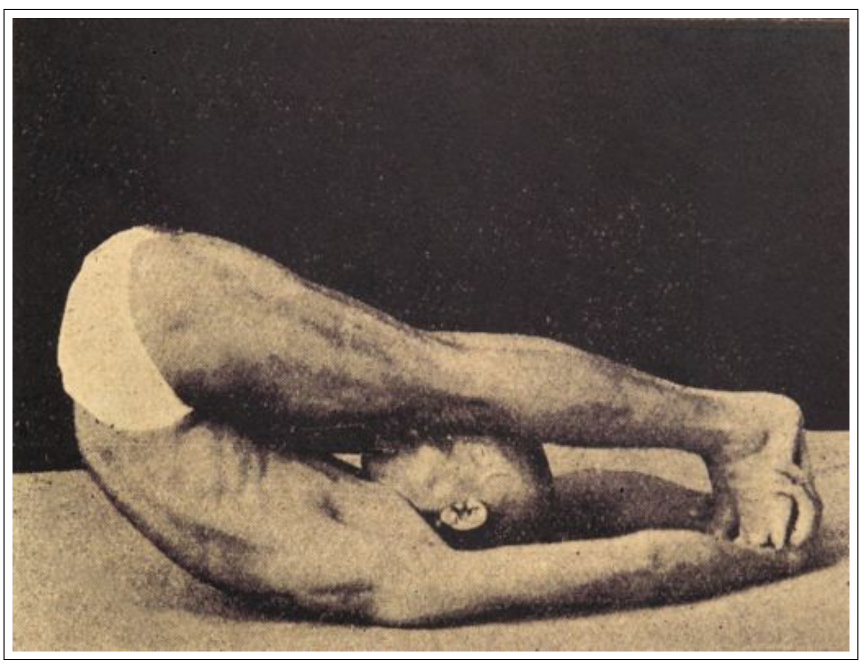


Figure 4.28: Urdhvamukha Pascimottanasana 4.

they are being fiercely pulled and this will be extremely painful. The pain will remain for 8 days. After this, the pulling on the nerves will release and it will be possible to do the *asana* without any problem. This *pascimottanasana* has many forms. After first practising this *asana* with the face pressed onto the knee, practise it with the chin placed on the knee and then eventually with it placed 3 *angulas* below the knee on the calf. In the 10th *vinyasa* raise the head. In the 11th *vinyasa*, keeping the hands firmly pressed on the ground, raise the entire body off the ground and balance it in the air without touching the ground. The 11th *vinyasa* is called *uthpluthi*. The 12th *vinyasa* is *caturanga dandasana*. The 13th is *urdhvamukhasvanasana*. The 14th is *adhomukhasvanasana*. The 15th is the first *vinyasa* of *uttanasana*. The 16th *vinyasa* is the 2nd *vinyasa* of *uttanasana*. Afterwards, return to *samasthiti*. You should learn the intricacies of this *vinyasa* only from a guru.

Benefit: This will cure all diseases related to the stomach.

This *asana* can be done on the floor or on a mat according to the capabilities of one's body. Learn some of the other forms of *pascimottanasana krama* by studying the pictures carefully. Pregnant women should not do this *asana*. But this can be done up to the third month of pregnancy. For men, there are no restrictions to practising this *asana*. If this is practised every day without fail for 15 minutes, all the bad diseases of the stomach will be removed.

9 Ardhabaddhapadmapascimottanasana (Figure 4.29, 4.30)

This has 22 *vinyasas*. The 8th and 15th *vinyasas* are the *asana sthiti*. Up to the 7th *vinyasa*, practise according to the *pascimottanasana vinyasa krama*. But in the 7th *vinyasa*, extend the left leg out in front. Place the right foot on top of the left thigh, such that the right heel touches the left lower abdomen. Take the right hand behind the back and clasp the right big toe with the fingers. Hold the big toe of the extended left leg with the fingers of the left hand. For the rest of the *vinyasas*, follow the same method as for *pascimottanasana* following the *krama*. In the 8th *vinyasa* itself, place the head on top of the knee of the left leg. The 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th and 14th *vinyasas* are as in *pascimottanasana*. But in the 14th *vinyasa*, extend the right leg and place the left foot onto its thigh such that the left heel touches the right lower abdomen. Take the left hand behind the back and take hold of the left big toe with the fingers. Hold the big toe of the extended right leg with the fingers of the right hand. Lower the head and place it on top of the outstretched kneecap. This is the 15th *vinyasa*. Do the 8th and the 15th *vinyasas* with *recaka*, pulling in the stomach and extending the legs straight



Figure 4.29: Dakshina Ardhabaddhapadma Pascimottanasana

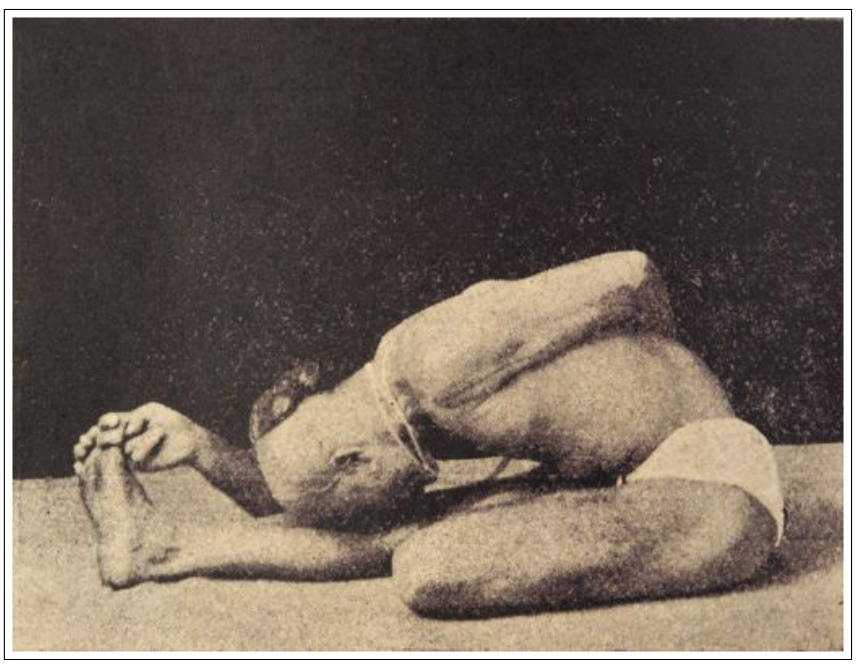


Figure 4.30: Vama Ardhabaddhapadma Pascimottanasana

out. These rules should not be forgotten while practising this *sthiti*. From the 16th until the 22nd *vinyasas* follow the *krama* for *pascimottanasana vinyasa*.

Benefit: All the diseases of the lower abdomen are cured. The *apana vayu* is cleaned and it helps awaken the *kundalini*.

Pregnant women should not do this.

10 Tiryangamukha ekapada pascimottanasana (Figure 4.31, 4.32)

This has 22 *vinyasas*. The 8th and the 15th *vinyasas* are the *asana sthiti*. From the 1st until the 7th *vinyasa*, the *asanas* follow the rules for *ardhabaddha-padma pascimottanasana*. But in the 7th *vinyasa*, extend the left leg straight out in front and fold the right leg facing towards the back.

Then practise the rest of the *vinyasas* following the *pascimottanasana krama* and *ardhabaddhapadma pascimottanasana krama*.

Benefit: Not only will it prevent elephantiasis, all the impurities and deposits in the nerves and joints and ligaments of the leg will dissolve, and it will give strength and speed in walking and running. It will clean the nearby *nadis*, eliminate pins and needles, and will make the blood circulation uniform and rapid.

If women practise this properly, they will have a good comfortable childbirth. But women should have practised all this before becoming pregnant. After conceiving, other than *pranayama*, *asanas* that are not specifically mentioned should not be practised.

11 Janusirsasana (Figure 4.33, 4.34)

This form follows the *hatha yoga* principles. Another form follows the *raja yoga* method. The practitioner should learn the difference. First, take either leg and extend it straight out in front. Keep the heel pressed firmly on the floor with the toes pointing upward. That is, the leg should not lean to either side. The base (back) of the knee should be pressed against the ground. Fold the other leg and place the heel against the genitals, with the area above the knee (the thigh) placed straight against the hip. That is, arrange the straight leg which has been extended in front and the folded leg so that together they form an "**L**". Up to this point, there is no difference between the practice of the *hatha yogi* and the *raja yogi*.

For the *hatha yoga* practitioner, the heel of the bent leg should be pressed firmly between the rectum and the scrotum. Tightly clasp the extended foot with

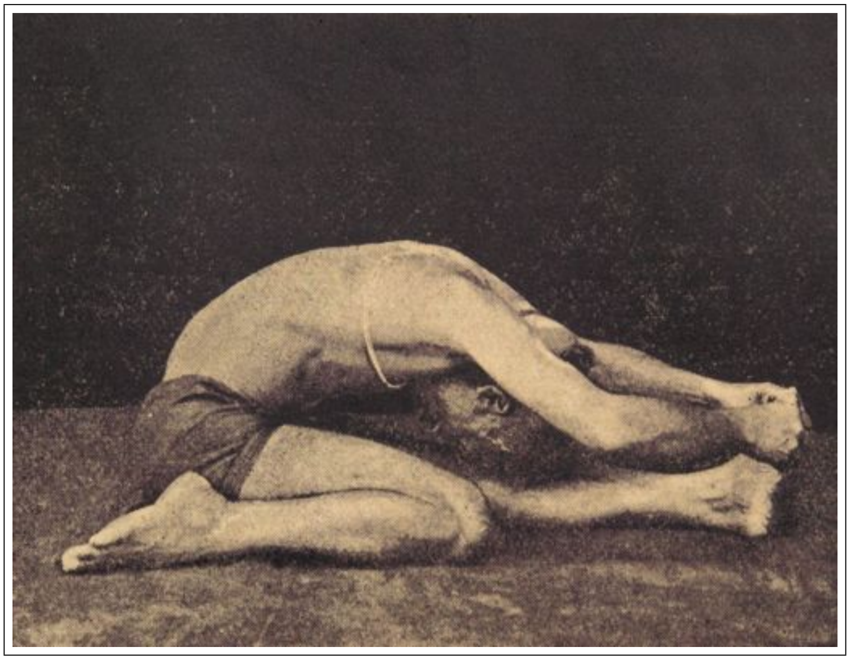


Figure 4.31: Tiryangamukha Dakshinapada Pascimottanasana



Figure 4.32: Tiryangamukha Vamapada Pascimottanasana

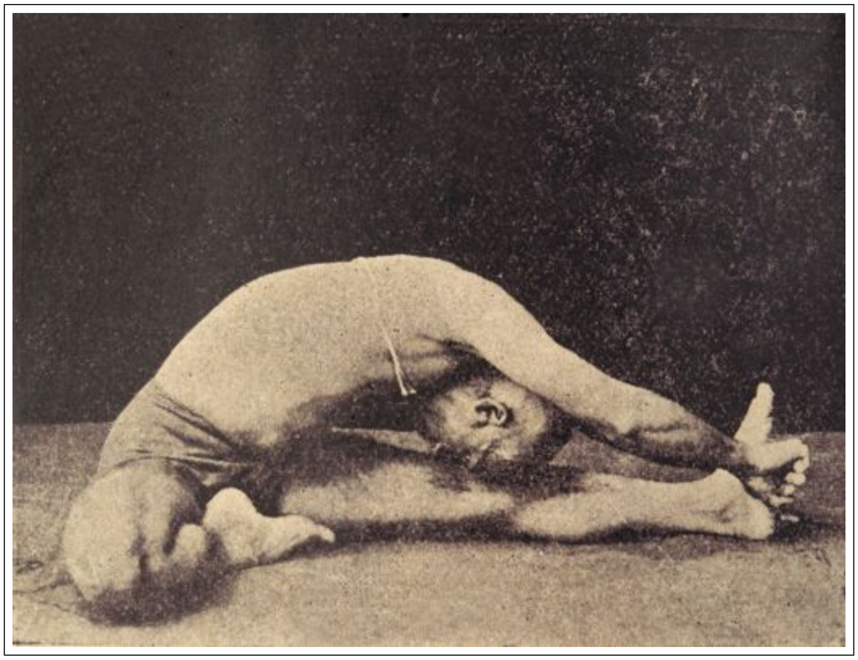


Figure 4.33: Vama Janusirsasana

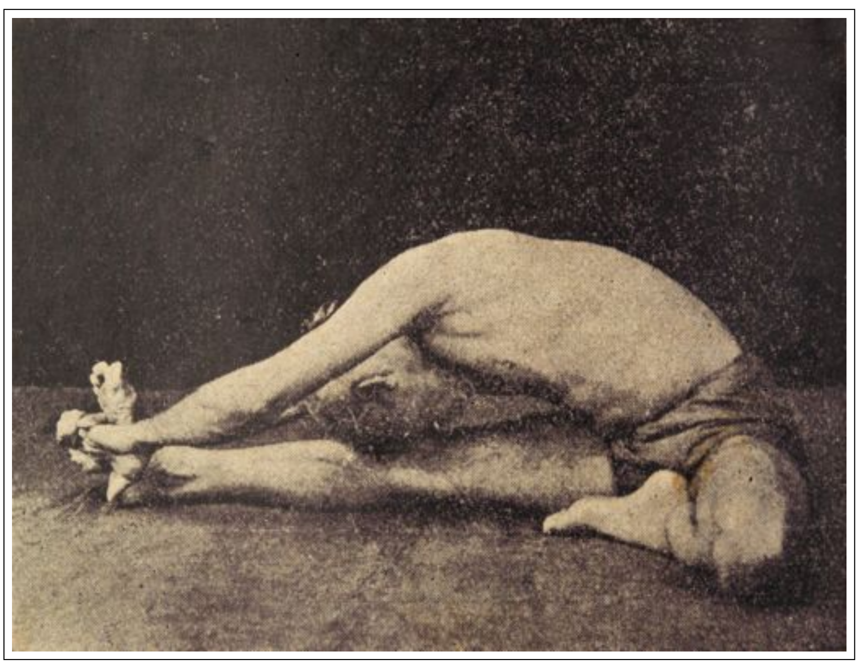


Figure 4.34: Dakshina Janusirsasana

both hands, raise the head and do *puraka kumbhaka*. Remain in this position for some time and then, doing *recaka*, lower the head and place the face onto the knee of the outstretched leg. While doing this, do not pull the breath in. It may be exhaled. After this, raise the head and do *puraka*. Repeat this on the other side following the rules mentioned above.

The *raja yogi* should place the back of the sole of the folded leg between the scrotum and the genitals. Now practise following the other rules described above for the *hatha yogis*. There are 22 *vinyasas* for *janusirsasana*. Please note carefully that all parts of the outstretched leg and the folded leg should touch the floor. While holding the feet with the hands, pull and clasp the feet tightly. Keep the head or face or nose on top of the kneecap and remain in this *sthiti* from 5 minutes up to half an hour. If it is not possible to stay in *recaka* for that long, raise the head in between, do *puraka kumbhaka* and then, doing *recaka*, place the head back down on the knee. While keeping the head lowered onto the knee, *puraka kumbhaka* should not be done. This rule must be followed in all *asanas*.

While practising this *asana*, however much the stomach is pulled in, there will be that much increase in the benefits received. While practising this, after exhaling the breath, hold the breath firmly. Without worrying about why this is so difficult, pull in the stomach beginning with the navel, keep the attention focussed on all the *nadis* in and near the rectal and the genital areas and pull these upwards — if you do the *asana* in this way, not only will all urinary diseases, diabetes and such diseases disappear, but wet dreams will stop, the *viryam* will thicken and the entire body will become strong.

Whoever is unable to pull in the *nadis* or the stomach may ignore just those instructions and follow the instructions mentioned earlier to the extent possible. Keep the *nadis* in and near the rectal and genital areas pulled up, the stomach pulled in and hold the *prana vayu* steady. Anybody with the power to practise this will very soon be free of disease and will get *virya balam*. Leaving this aside, if you follow the rules according to your capability, you will gradually attain the benefits mentioned below.

Important Observation:

After practising the asana for just one or two minutes, do not whine that you did not receive any benefits. However little effort there is, if you keep practising the *asana* daily for at least 5 to 10 minutes, you will start experiencing its benefits in a few days. There is no doubt about this. If you keep practising it from half an hour to an hour following the given rules, you will get the benefits mentioned below.

1. Diseases of the spleen will be removed.

2. People suffering from a low-grade persistent fever in the stomach will notice that the fever, the resulting anaemia and other such dangerous diseases will be wiped out. Continuous and recurrent cough, bloated stomach, flatulence and the first symptoms of tuberculosis will disappear. As a result of these intestinal *doshas* being removed, the digestive power increases and one feels hunger at the appropriate time. When you are very hungry, it is essential to eat *sattvic* foods cooked in pure ghee or cow's milk or goat's milk. Rice *avul*, *kara boondi* (fried peanut flour), *kara vadai*, peanuts, chickpeas — these *tamasic* foods should never be eaten. Eating high-quality fruits and *kanda mulam* is very beneficial.

When they are hungry, some people will eat terrible things without thinking about it. This is a despicable matter. Because of this, they keep catching various diseases and suffering as a result.

If one keeps practising *janusirsasana* according to the rules described above, then whatever diseases cause blocking of urine and faeces, increase the heat in the *nadis*, cause an increase in *vata*, if any such acute diseases occur, they will be destroyed from the root and the practitioner will be in good health very soon.

Heavy head, burning eyes, weakness of the body, burning in the urinary area, fever caused by toxins built up due to indigestion and constipation, loss of appetite and sense of taste in the tongue due to a spoilt tongue, laziness or lethargy — all these will be removed by practising the *asana* in the highest standard. That is, all diseases caused by weakness of the *nadis* nearby will be removed.

It is important to always remember that it is necessary to practise such *asanas* like *janusirsasana* on both the left and right sides. The reason for this is that the strength of the body should be the same on both the left and right sides. Nowadays, modern games and physical exercises give strength to only one side of the body without developing proper blood circulation on the other side. This will result in paralysis and other such diseases. Therefore, every *asana* must definitely be practised equally on both the left and the right side.

Janusirsasana 2nd Krama

Whichever leg was folded and placed such that the back of the foot was between the rectum and genitals, place the back of the sole of that foot instead against the top of the thigh of the outstretched leg, firmly pressing against it. Now practise according to the rules described earlier. But the benefits of this will be received very slowly. Some people will not be able to place the head on top of the knee on the first day. But one should not abandon the effort thinking that this is impossible. If one keeps practising this for one or two months daily without fail, following the prescribed rules, then it will become possible.

It will be very difficult for those who have allowed excessive flesh to grow in the stomach and hips to practise this. By practising this regularly over a period of time, all the excessive flesh that has grown in or near the stomach and hips will melt, the joints of the bones and *nadis* will clear up, the stomach will grow thinner and eventually the head will touch the knee. The deposits of excessive flesh are the main cause for the lack of flexibility in the body. All this can be melted away with *asana abhyasa*.

Many people who have a protruding stomach like a pumpkin believe that they are healthy. Others think that they have correspondingly as much more strength as their arms, legs and thighs are excessively huge, and they keep trying to enlarge the girth of the body. One can clearly say that this is a result of their stupidity. Being blessed with good health is not in the plumpness of the body. The limbs of small children are soft and supple — to lift and bend them is easy. The limbs of adults should be similarly soft and supple and strong and there should be no obstruction to the *prana vayu* and the blood circulation. Everybody knows that people who have overly large stomachs or who are obese often have excessive breathlessness and bloating of the stomach.

But they have not realized that the *vayu sancharam* is not proper in any part of the body. When there is no proper movement of air in the body, mounds of excessive flesh will collect in the body forming a barrier. Without proper air circulation, how will the dust fly away? Without water, how can the earth become soft? Similarly, in our bodies, if we want the blood to circulate and the *prana vayu* to flow properly without obstruction, we need to first knock down and remove the bad deposits of flesh (*durmamsam*) which appear like a wall. Only *prana vayu* has the capacity and power to completely destroy the excessive blobs of flesh that exist here and there in the body. This cannot be done with any other medicine.

The stomach is the only cause of an untimely death. There is no other reason. The dwelling place of death in the body is only the big stomach and nowhere else. Even though we desire long life and good health, why do we make our stomachs very large and leave room for death in them? Is this not a terrible thing? Therefore, by practising *janusirsasana* following the *krama* with correct instructions, one can melt away the stomach, no matter how large it is. You can definitely believe that as the stomach reduces in size, the death dwelling in it will leave the body. There is no doubt about this.

It is superior to regularly practise this *janusirsasana* before becoming pregnant. One should not do it after becoming pregnant. If women who have stomach pain during menstruation practise this *asana* following the instructions mentioned

above, in one or two months, all the germs that cause the stomach pain will be removed from the blood channels and will be expelled out of the body through the urinary tract.

This has 22 *vinyasas*. The 8th and the 15th *vinyasas* are themselves the *asana sthiti*. The benefit is correspondingly as great as one's capacity for *recaka*.

12 Upavistakonasana (Figure 4.35)

This has 15 *vinyasas*. *Recaka kumbhaka* is its primary principle. All the *vinyasas* must be done following the instructions for *pascimottanasana*. But in the 7th *vinyasa* for *pascimottanasana*, we extend the legs straight out between the two hands. In the 7th *vinyasa* for *upavishtakonasana*, instead of extending the legs out in front between the two hands, spread the legs as far apart as possible while extending them. Remember that the knees should not be raised or bent. Then follow the instructions just as described for *pascimottanasana*. Clasp the big toes with the fingers of the hand, lower the head and place the face on the floor between the legs. This is called *upavishtakonasana* (the 8th *vinyasa*). The 9th *vinyasa* is like *pascimottanasana*'s 10th *vinyasa*. The 10th to the 15th *vinyasas* are like the 11th to the 16th *vinyasas* of *pascimottanasana*. After this, return to *samasthiti*. This must also be done while lying down on the back.

Benefit: Hip pain, knee pain, any disease that occurs near the region where the thighs meet, violent stomach pain, and flatulence will be cured.

If all women practise this *upavisthakonasana* for one half hour both in the morning and evening according to the prescribed rules during the time of menstruation, all the diseases of the uterus will be cured. This *asana*, along with *janusirsasana* and *baddhakonasana* must be practised daily without fail by anybody who has irregular menstruation. In three months, they will have proper healthy regular menstrual cycles.

13 Baddhakonasana (Figure 4.36, 4.37)

This has 15 *vinyasas*. The 8th *vinyasa* is the *asana sthiti*. The 1st to the 6th *vinyasas* are like the 1st till the 6th *vinyasas* for *pascimottanasana*. In the 7th *vinyasa*, just like the 7th *vinyasa* for *pascimottanasana*, keep the hands down and bring the legs forward in *uthpluthi*. But instead of straightening them, fold the legs and place them down on the ground. Folding them means that the heel of the right foot is pasted against the base of the right thigh and the heel of the left foot is pasted against the base of the left thigh. When the legs are folded in this manner, the soles of the feet will be facing each other. Hold the sole of the left

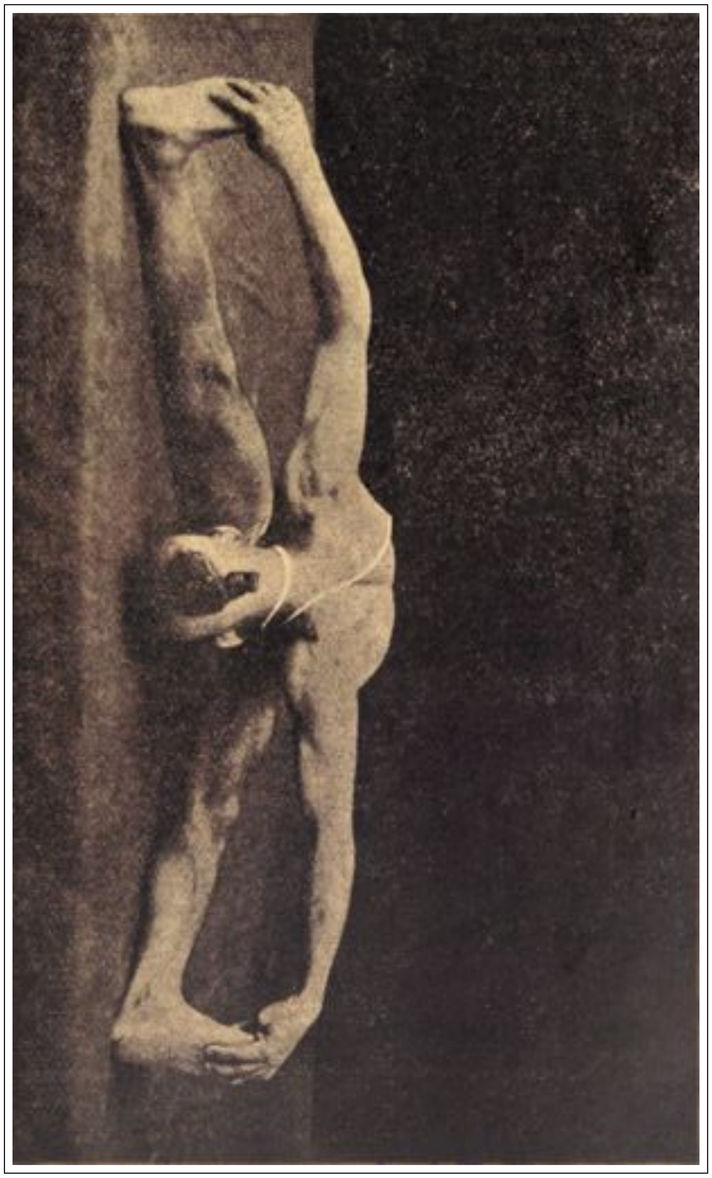


Figure 4.35: Upavistakonasana

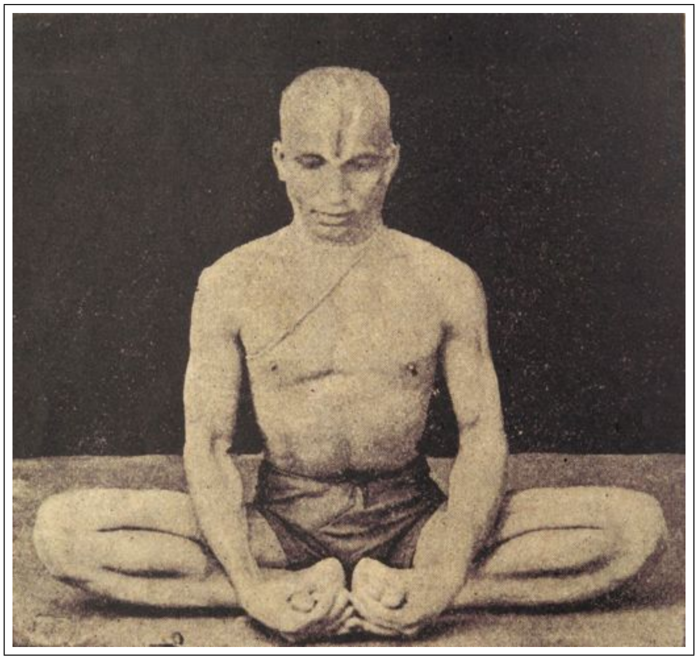


Figure 4.36: Baddhakonasana Stithi

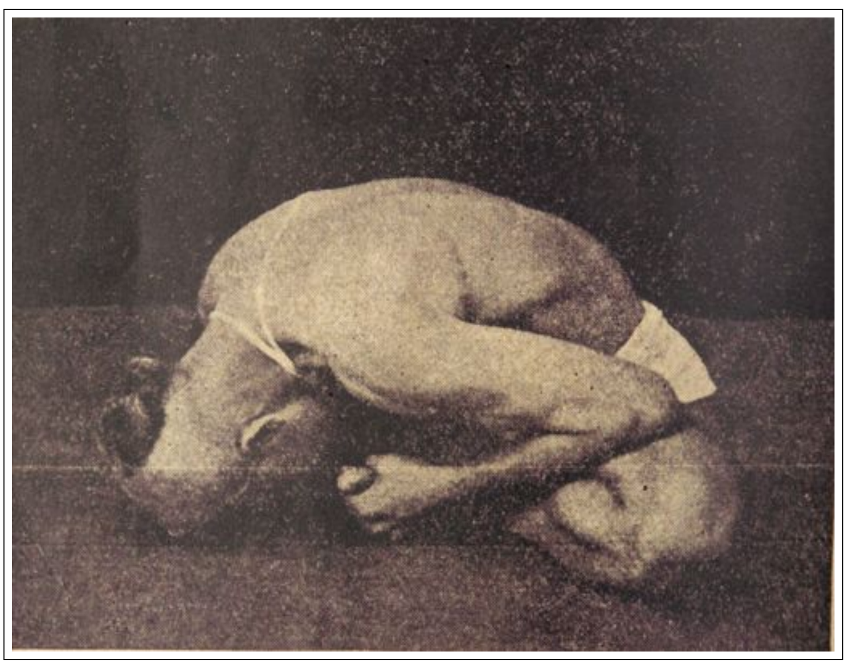


Figure 4.37: Baddhakonasana

foot firmly with the left hand and hold the right sole firmly with the right hand. Clasping the soles together firmly, do *recaka kumbhaka*, lower the head and place it on the floor in front of the feet. After practising this properly, press the head against the top of the soles of the feet. While keeping the head either on the floor or on the soles of the feet, make sure that the seat of the body does not rise up from the floor and remains stuck to the floor. This *sthiti* is *baddhakonasana*. After this, from the 8th until the 15th *vinyasas*, practise as in *upavishtakonasana* and then return to *samasthiti*.

Benefit: Coughing, urinary diseases (constant dripping of urine, burning urine), genital discharges, collapsing of the navel inward — such diseases will be cured.

If women practise this especially during menstruation, it will cure all menstrual diseases and will clean the uterus. It will be very helpful for women who wish to conceive.

14 Supta Padangushtasana (Figure 4.38, 4.39, 4.40, 4.41)

The first *krama* for this has 21 *vinyasas*. Through the 6th *vinyasa*, it is exactly as for *pascimottanasana*. In the 7th *vinyasa*, lie down facing upwards instead of extending the legs and sitting as in *pascimottanasana*. While lying down, the entire body must be pressed against the ground. The toes must point upwards and the back of the heels must be stuck to the ground. This is also called **savasana** by other schools. This is the 7th *vinyasa* for *supta padangushthasana*. In the 8th *vinyasa*, slowly raise the right leg straight up. Hold the big toe of the right foot with the fingers of the right hand, do *recaka kumbhaka* and remain in this position for as long as possible. This *sthiti* is called *dakshina supta padangushtasana*. While remaining in this *sthiti*, at no time should the elbows or knees of the extended arms and legs be bent. At this time the left hand should be placed on top of the thigh of the outstretched left leg. In the 9th *vinyasa*, slowly pull the right leg little by little into the front of the right chest. While doing this, gradually raise the head little by little until the face is placed against the right knee. Remain in this position for some time. The 10th *vinyasa* is like the 8th. The 11th *vinyasa* is like the 7th. The 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th *vinyasas* follow the method for the 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th but with the left leg and arm. From the 16th until the 21st *vinyasas*, follow the rules for the 11th until the 16th *vinyasas* of *pascimottanasana* and after this return to *samasthiti*. The 12th *vinyasa* is called *vama supta padangushthasana*. From the 8th till the 15th *vinyasas*, no part of the body must be crooked. While one leg is raised, the

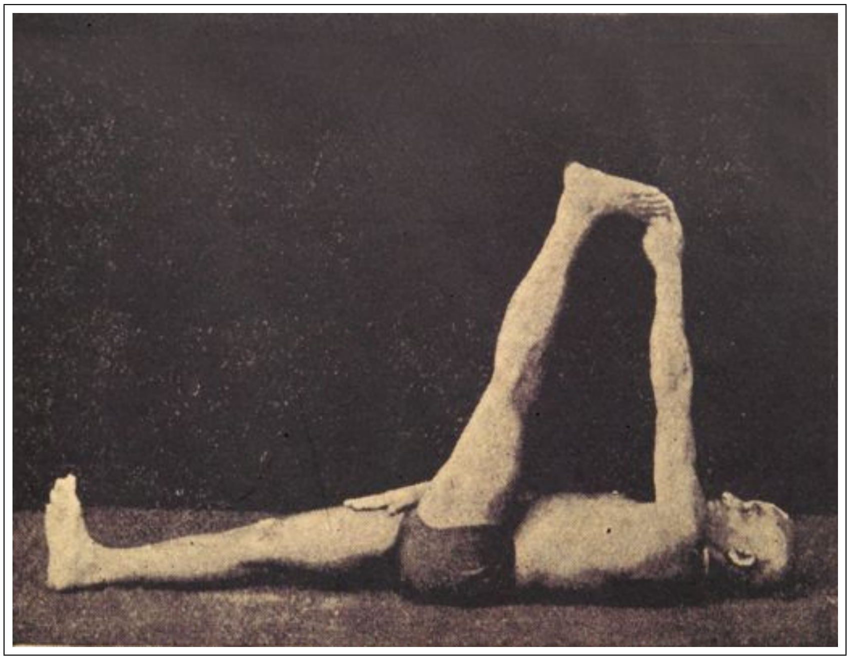


Figure 4.38: Supta Vama Padangushtasana

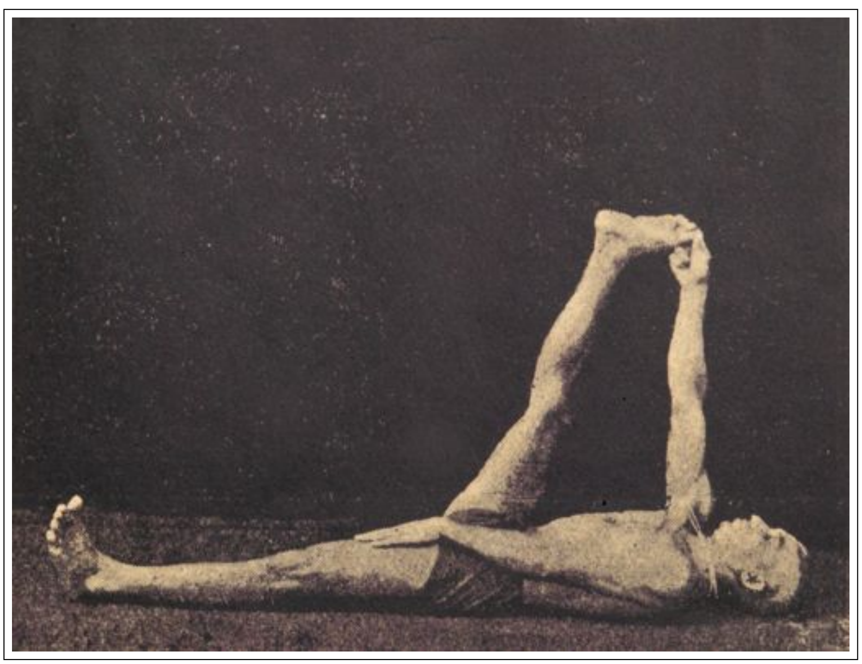


Figure 4.39: Supta Dakshina Padangushtasana

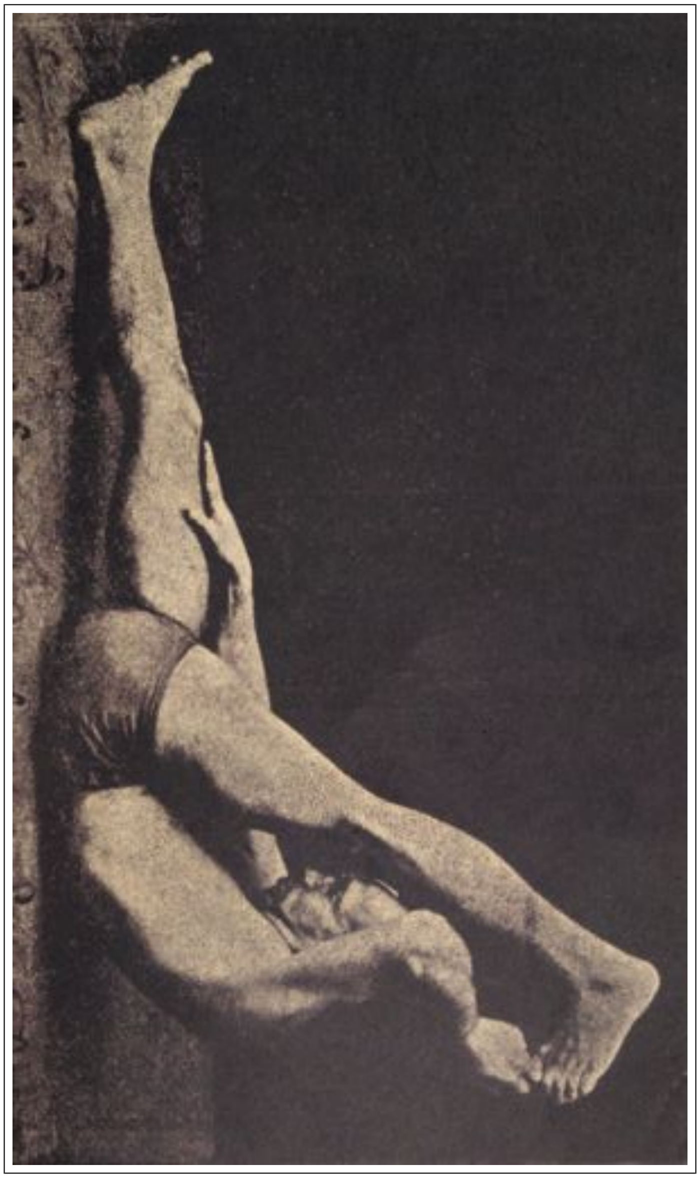


Figure 4.40: Supta Utthita Vamapada Janusirsasana

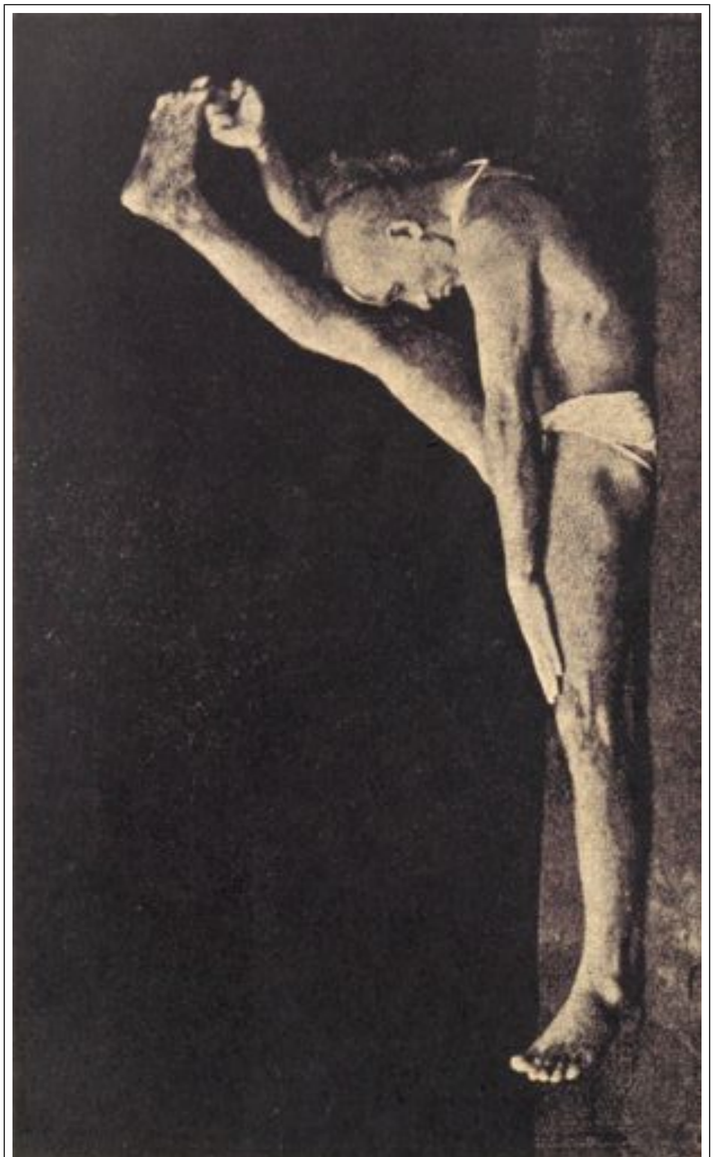


Figure 4.41: Supta Utthita Dakshinapada Janusirsasana

other leg must definitely not be bent or curved, must not roll around or undergo any such torsion.

Benefit: It will keep the body measurements proportional and equal and will give tremendous strength to the nerves. It gives good strength to the hips. It is not appropriate for women during pregnancy.

15 Suptapada Parsvangushtasana (Figure 4.42, 4.43, 4.44, 4.45)

This has 23 *vinyasas*. Up to the 8th *vinyasa*, this follows the method for *supta padangushthasana*. In the 9th *vinyasa*, without breaking any of the rules described earlier, pull the raised right leg down towards the ground on the same side (right side) and slowly lay it down on the ground while still clasping the right big toe. In this *sthiti* the head is facing upward and the other extended leg is kept straight and remains pressed against the floor. Stay in this 9th *vinyasa* for at least ten minutes and then do the 10th *vinyasa*. In the 10th *vinyasa*, bring the foot that is being held against the ground back to the position in the 8th *vinyasa* and remain here. Without letting go of the foot, move it such that the leg (or calf) sits on the chest beneath the neck and such that the elbow of the arm holding the foot is behind the neck. Remain here. In this *sthiti*, the head must be raised slightly. That is, there should be 6 *angulas* of space between the ground and the head. Inside the *matham*, this is called **sammukha parivrtasana**. Repeat this on the other side. To first practise this with the right leg and then with the left leg is characteristic of a superior yogi. The 11th *vinyasa* is like the 8th and the 12th is like the 7th. Do the 13th *vinyasa* like the 8th and then do the 14th and 15th *vinyasas* like the 9th and 10th. The 16th is like the 8th and the 17th must be done like the 7th. The six remaining *vinyasas* of this posture must be practised like the last 6 *vinyasas* of *pascimottanasana*. After this, return to *samasthiti*.

Benefit: Not only does it clean the *parsva nadi*, it does not allow the *parsva vayu* to exist in the body. It destroys diseases like acute tuberculosis. Women should not do this while pregnant.

16 Utthita Parsvakonasana (Figure 4.46, 4.47)

Stand with the feet three *mozhams* apart. Initially, when you first begin to practise, it is enough to stand with the feet even 1.5 *mozhams* apart. As in *tadasana*, the back of the body should not be even slightly bent and must be kept straight. After this, keeping one leg straight, slowly bend the second leg,



Figure 4.42: Supta Parsva Vamapadangushtasana

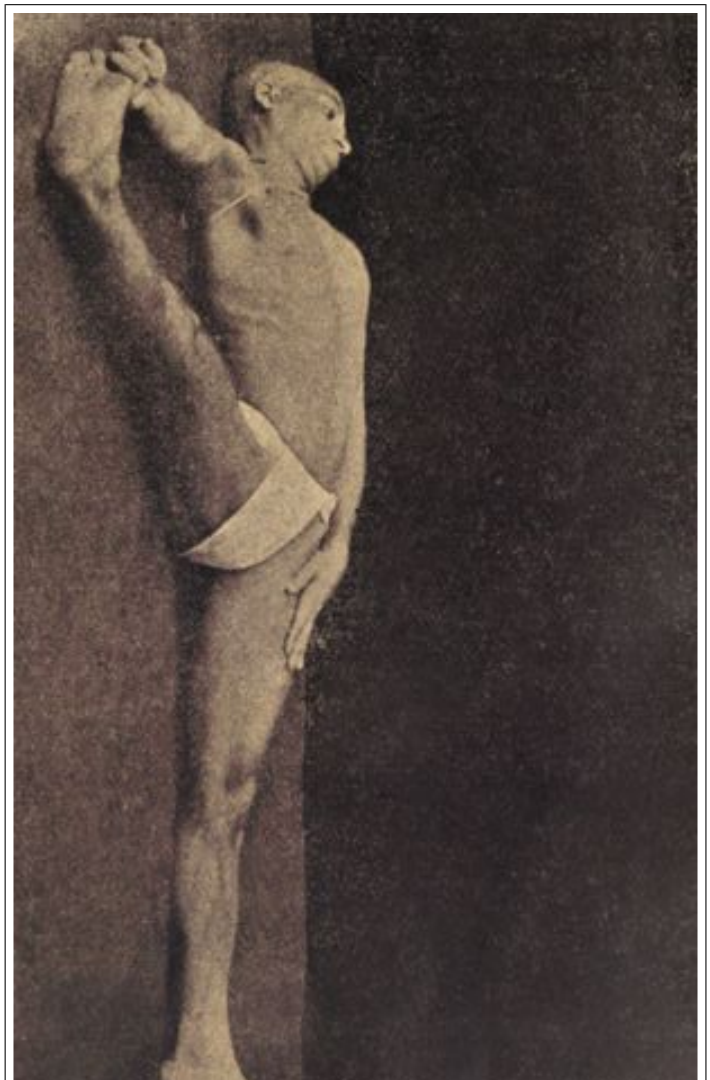


Figure 4.43: Supta Parsva Dakshinapadangushtasana



Figure 4.44: Supta ardhaparivrtta Dakshinapadasana

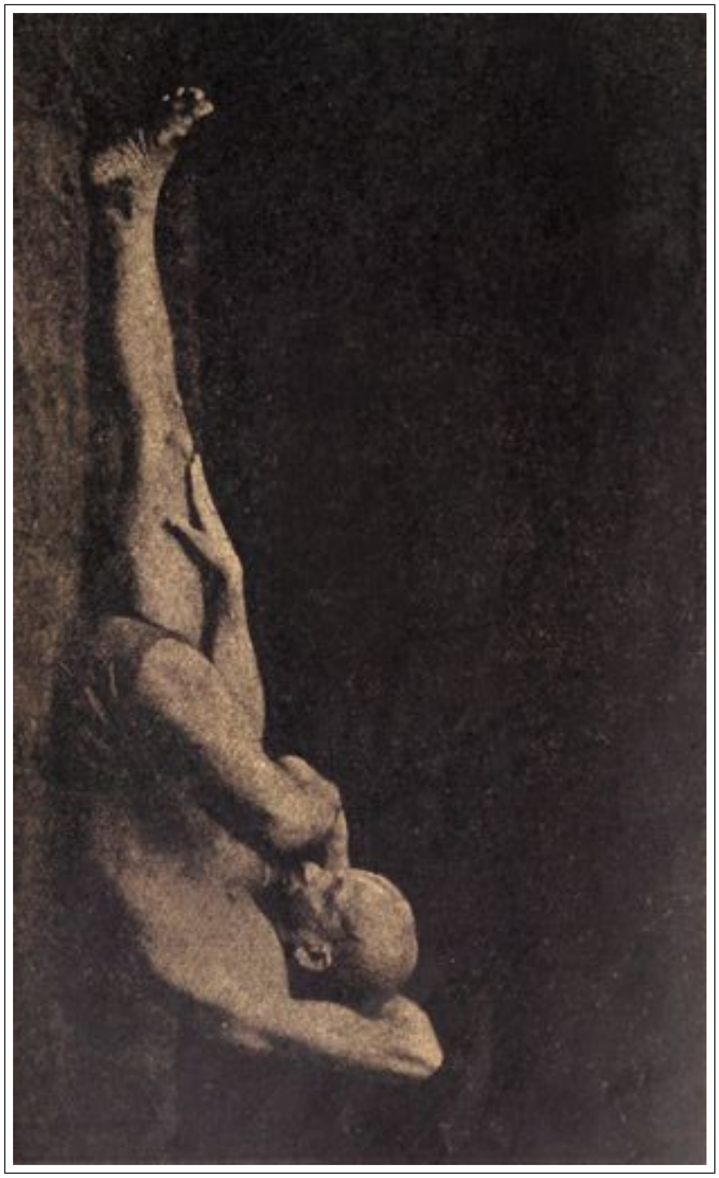


Figure 4.45: Supta ardhaparivrtta Vamapadasana



Figure 4.46: Utthita Vama Parsvakonasana

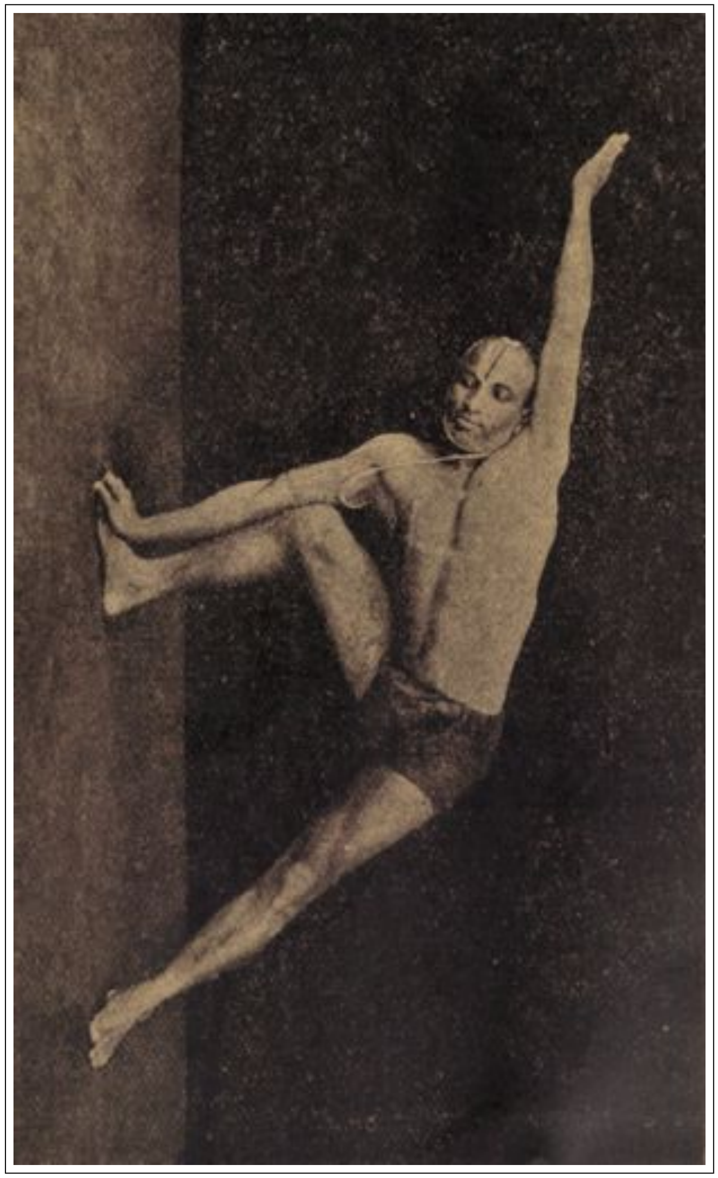


Figure 4.47: Utthita Dakshina Parsvakonasana

lower the arm down on the bent side and hold the toes of the bent leg with the fingers of the same hand. Lift the other arm straight up and keep it as shown in the picture. That is, in this *sthiti*, the body will bend to one side. Keep the shoulders such that the ear is pressed on the upper part of the bent body and the head. Stay in this position for some time. After this return to the earlier position and repeat on the other side.

In this *asana sthiti*, the inhalation and exhalation of the breath should be equal. The resulting benefits can be experienced within ten days. If you bend the arms and legs, or inhale or exhale the breath too quickly, this *asana* will not yield any benefits.

Benefit: As a result of this *asana*, the liver is cleaned and there will be an increase and strengthening of blood. Stomach pain, constipation, burning urine, tumours or boils caused by fever — such diseases will be destroyed. There will be clean proper blood circulation in the ligaments and nerves, and the blood flow will be vigourous. If people who suffer from violent stomach pain and flatulence practise this *konasana* along with *pascimottanasana* in the morning and evening daily for one month, the problem will fly away leaving no trace. In the beginning, it is enough to stay in this *sthiti* for even ten seconds. With practice, one can slowly increase the duration. Even those who are initially unable to do the *asana* properly must practise without hurrying, making the effort to gradually arrive at the proper *sthiti*. If they practise this, it will be possible to do the *asana* properly within 15 days.

Trikonasana (Figure 4.48)

First, stand following the instructions for *tadasana krama*. Then, keeping the legs spread no less than 3 *mozhams* apart, take either arm and lift it straight up, lower the other arm while keeping it straight and bring the hand down and place it on top of the foot. Study this carefully in the picture. The inhalation and exhalation of breath must be equal and slow. Practise this on both sides as described here. This *asana* must be practised for a minimum of 10 minutes. However slowly and patiently we practise this, there is that much corresponding benefit. Day by day our health improves. Because of this *asana*, the nerves in the back, hips, arms, neck and heels will see an increase in proper clean blood circulation.

If one keeps practising this *asana* little by little during the time that there is pain caused by *vata roga* in the hips, neck, knees, and elbows, then not only will this pain gradually decrease, but eventually it will never occur again. All medical expenses will be eliminated. There is no better way to reduce and eliminate

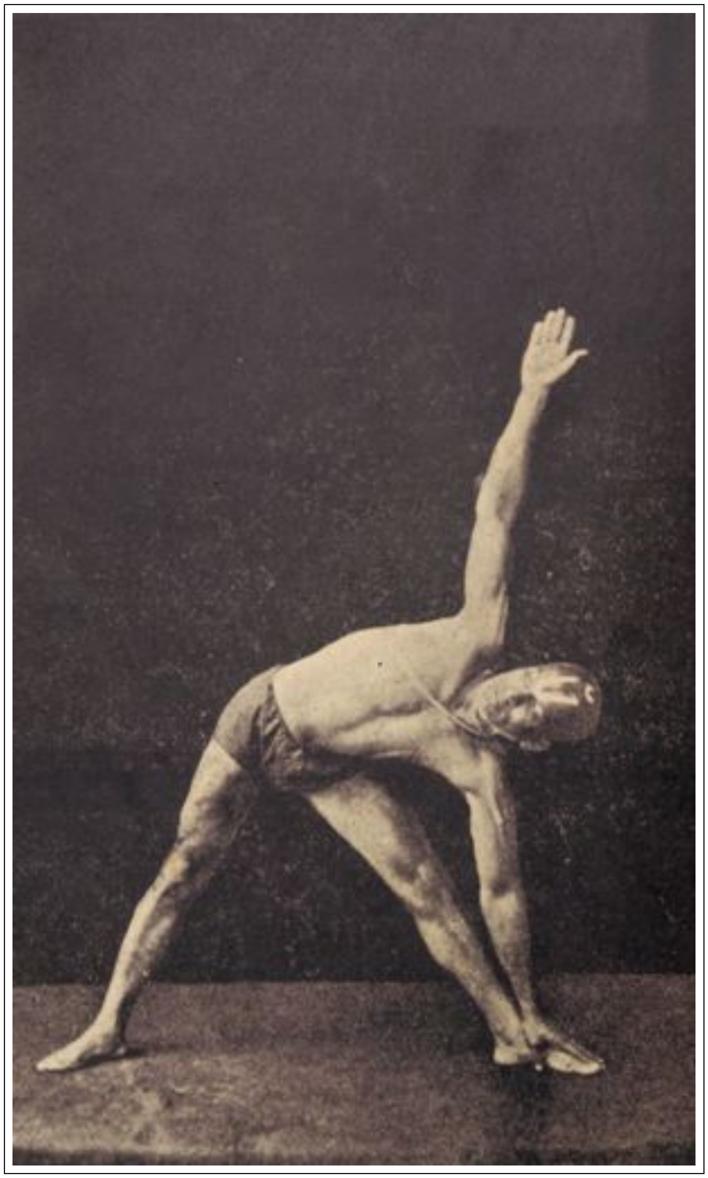


Figure 4.48: Trikonasana

excessive mounds of flesh in the hips, neck, elbows, knees, wrists, back and navel, than by practising this *asana*.

This *asana* can be done lying down. But the back of the head, back, buttocks, the heels — all of these areas must be firmly pressed against the floor. While those who don't have the strength to stand up and do this posture as a result of some problem may lie down and practise it, others who have the strength should practise it only while standing. If even those who have no strength keep practising this *asana* lying down for 20 days, they will develop the strength to stand up and practise.

In cold weather, one may practise the posture while lying down on a large bed and covering oneself with a sheet. If one practises this *asana* at least 4 to 5 times on each side after waking up and before leaving the bed, it will lead to correct and complete clearing of the bowels and of urine from the body. There are superior benefits for old people who practise this *asana*. Pregnant women should not do this. All other women can practise this regularly and freely.

17 Utthitahasta Padangushtasana (Figure 4.49, 4.50, 4.51)

First, push the chest forward and stand erect with equal balance. While standing this way, make sure that the head, neck, back, hips, arms and legs are aligned properly and gaze at the tip of the nose. The feet must be kept together. Now, raise one leg up slowly and maintain this position with the extended leg kept straight out in front at the height of the navel. The knee should not bend and the leg must be kept straight for the entire time that it is being raised. After the leg has been raised about 3/4 of the way without any assistance, take the first three fingers of the corresponding hand (the same as whichever leg was raised) and tightly clasp the big toe of the raised foot. Remain in this position for some time. Keep the other hand on the hip. Inhalation and exhalation of the breath must be slow and of equal duration. One says the *sthiti* is correct if there is the same measure of distance between the standing leg and the raised leg. In this there are many other forms.

After staying in this *sthiti* for some time, take either the face or the nose towards the knee of the raised leg and place it there. *Recaka kumbhaka* must be done in this *sthiti*. That is, expel the breath completely from the body, maintain this position and then without allowing any breath into the body, bend the upper body. Now carefully pull in the stomach as much as one's strength allows and hold it in. Stay in this *sthiti* for at least one minute. At this time, the knee must be kept straight without bending. Remember this when you practise. In the beginning, it might not be possible to do this properly. But if one keeps

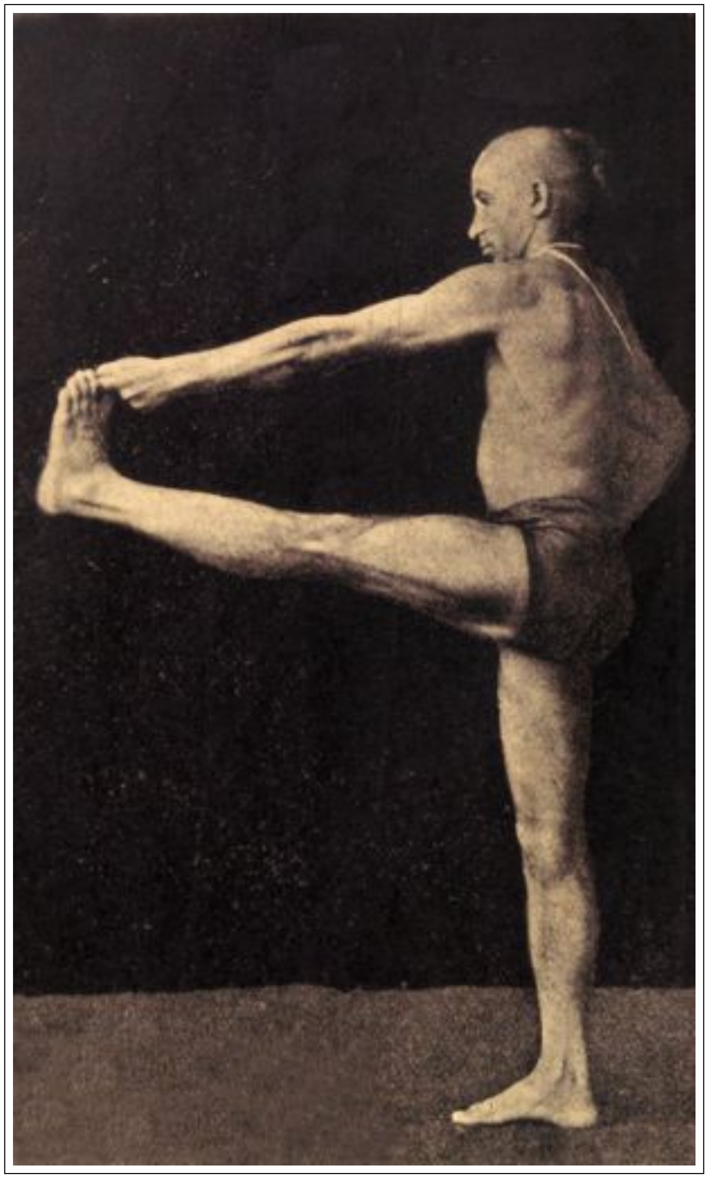


Figure 4.49: Vama Utthita Hasta Padangushtasana

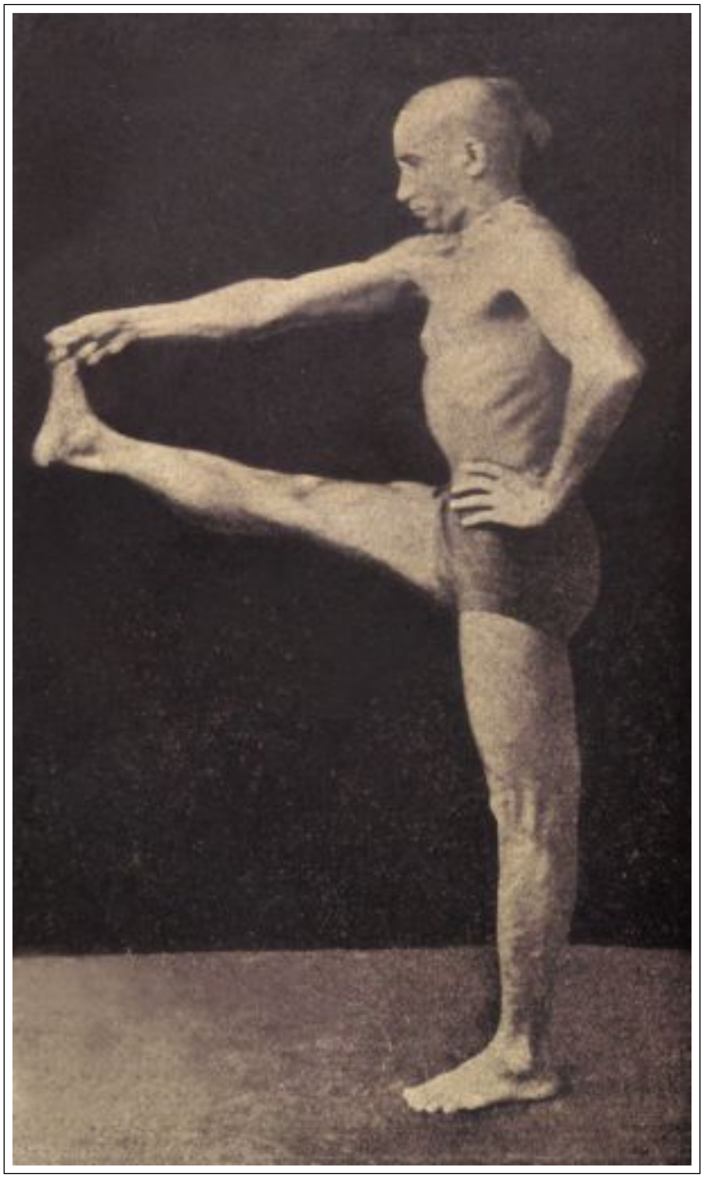


Figure 4.50: Dakshina Utthita Hasta Padangushtasana

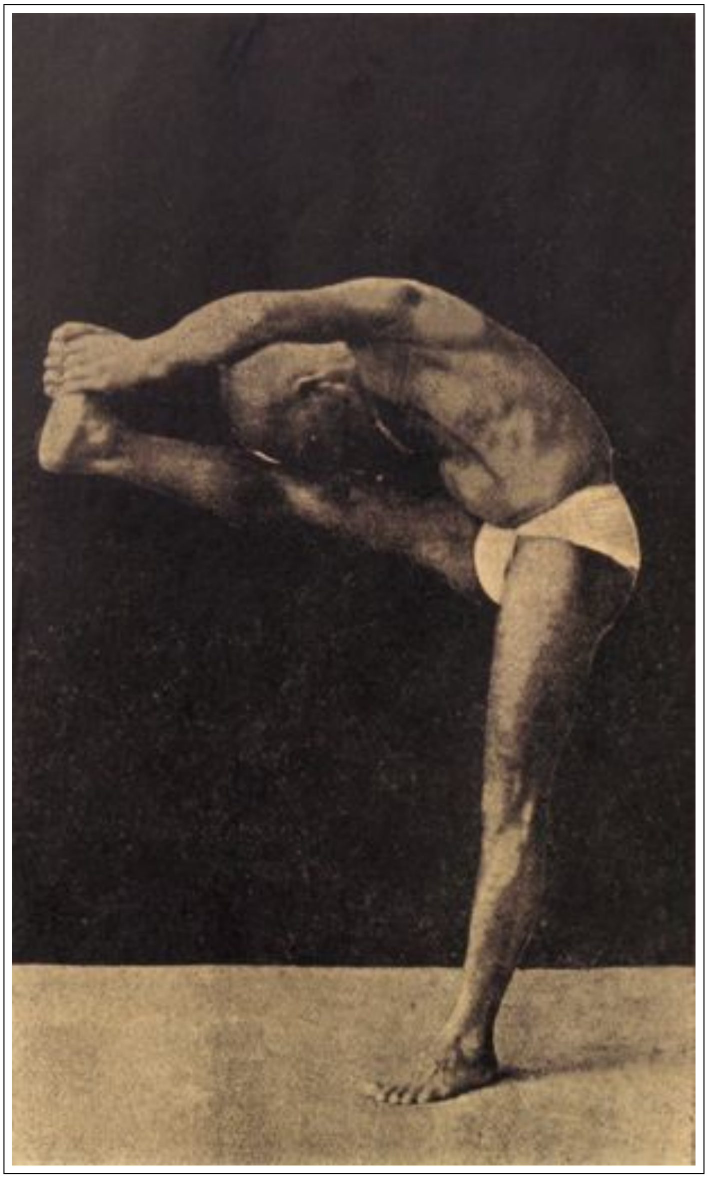


Figure 4.51: Utthita Pada Pascimattanasana

practising following the given rules for 10 to 15 days, it will become possible to do it properly.

Because of this *asana*, our body's important areas — the arms, legs, knees, hips, bones of the back, the buttocks, stomach, neck — these will be cleaned. Not only this, it will facilitate proper clean blood circulation in the nerves.

Those who practise this can, even on the first day, recognize the changes in the location and movements of the *nadi* (that is, what are the regions where our nerve bundles are not in the correct state or proper position).

Those who cannot do the *asana* properly on the first day may stand using the support of the wall, place the raised leg on top of a table and then follow the instructions described above. But if done this way, the benefits are much fewer. After practising this way following the *krama* for 5 or 6 days, learn to do this *asana* without any aids. Initially, when you first practise this without any support, you might fall down. In that case, after slowly exhaling the breath out, firmly hold the breath. This will prevent a fall.

18 Baddhapadmasana (Figure 4.52, 4.53, 4.54, 4.55)

Place the right foot on top of the left thigh and the left foot on top of the right thigh. Take the hands behind the back and tightly clasp the big toe of the right foot with the first three fingers of the right hand and tightly clasp the big toe of the left foot with the first three fingers of the left hand.

Press the chin firmly against the chest. Keep the gaze fixed on the midbrow. Sit down, keeping the rest of the body straight. This has the name *baddhapadmasana*. This *asana* must be repeated on the other side (that is, first place the left foot on top of the right thigh and then the right foot on top of the left thigh) in order to exercise both sides of the body.

This has 16 *vinyasas*. The 8th and 9th *vinyasas* are the *asana sthiti*. The other *vinyasas* are like *pascimottanasana*. Study the pictures (Figures 4.52, 4.53) and learn how to keep the gaze. In this *asana*, one must do *puraka kumbhaka*. Only in **yoga mudra sthiti** should one do *recaka*. This *sthiti* consists of two forms — so study the pictures (Figures 4.54, 4.55) carefully.

Benefit: It will cure all diseases of the lower abdomen. Pregnant women should not do this *asana*.

19 Bhujapidasana (Figure 4.56, 4.57, 4.58)

This has 15 *vinyasas*. *Vinyasas* 1 through 6 are like *pascimottanasana*. Without allowing the feet to touch the floor, jump very carefully from the 6th *vinyasa*



Figure 4.52: Baddha Padmasana - Gaze on tip of nose



Figure 4.53: Baddha Padmasana - Gaze on midbrow

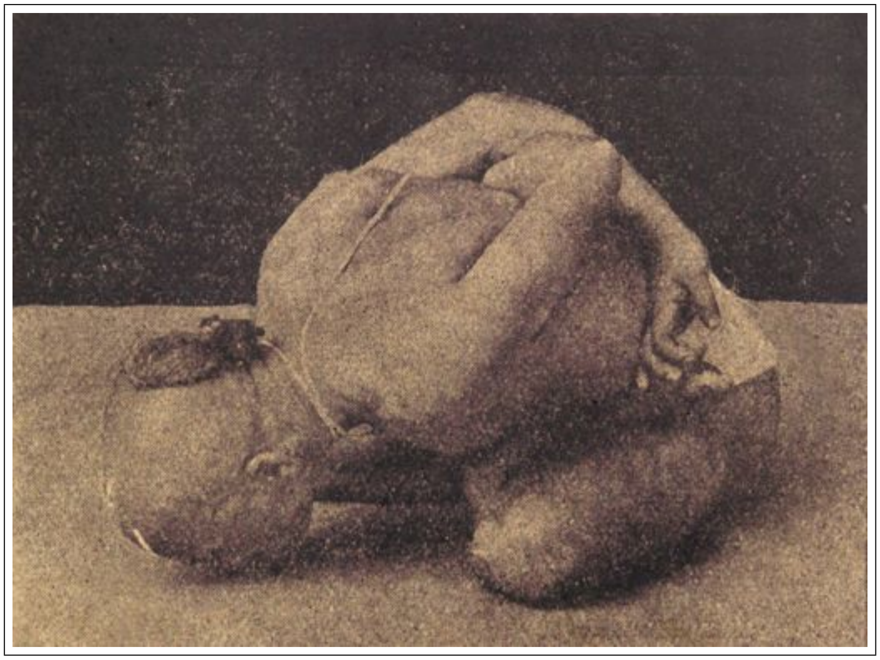


Figure 4.54: Baddha Padmasana Yogamudra Sthiti 1.



Figure 4.55: Baddha Padmasana Yogamudra Sthiti 2.

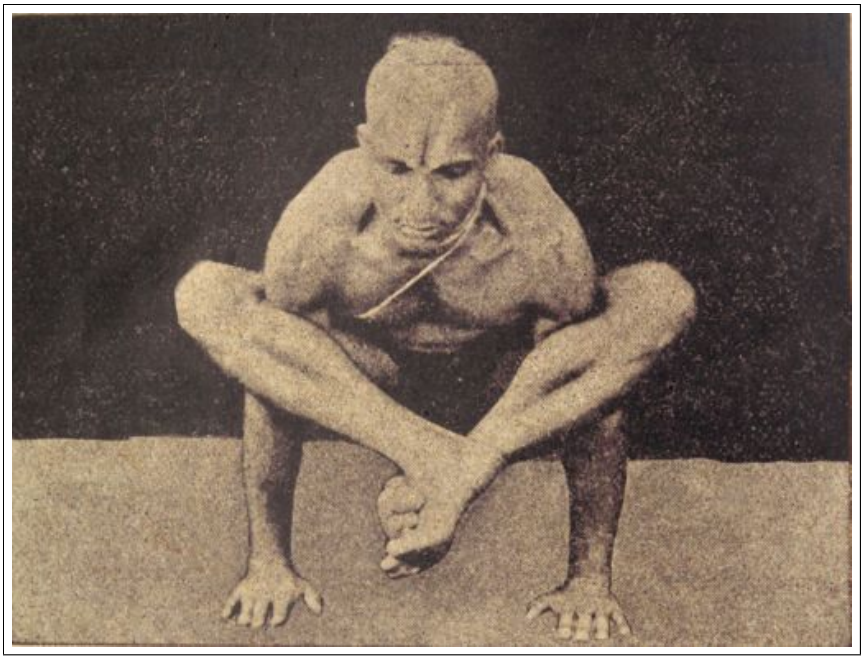


Figure 4.56: Bhujapidasana 1.

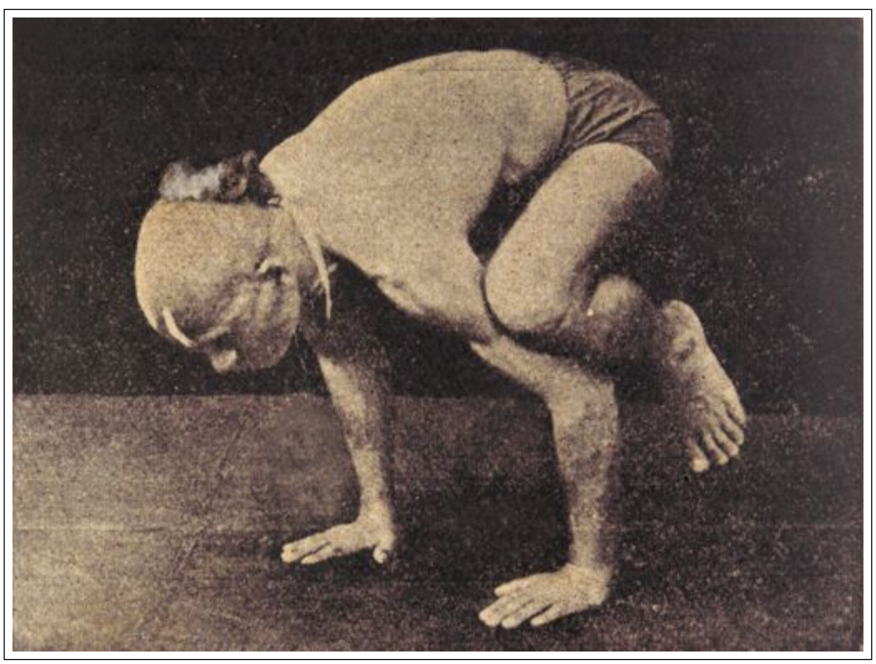


Figure 4.57: Bhujapidasana 2.

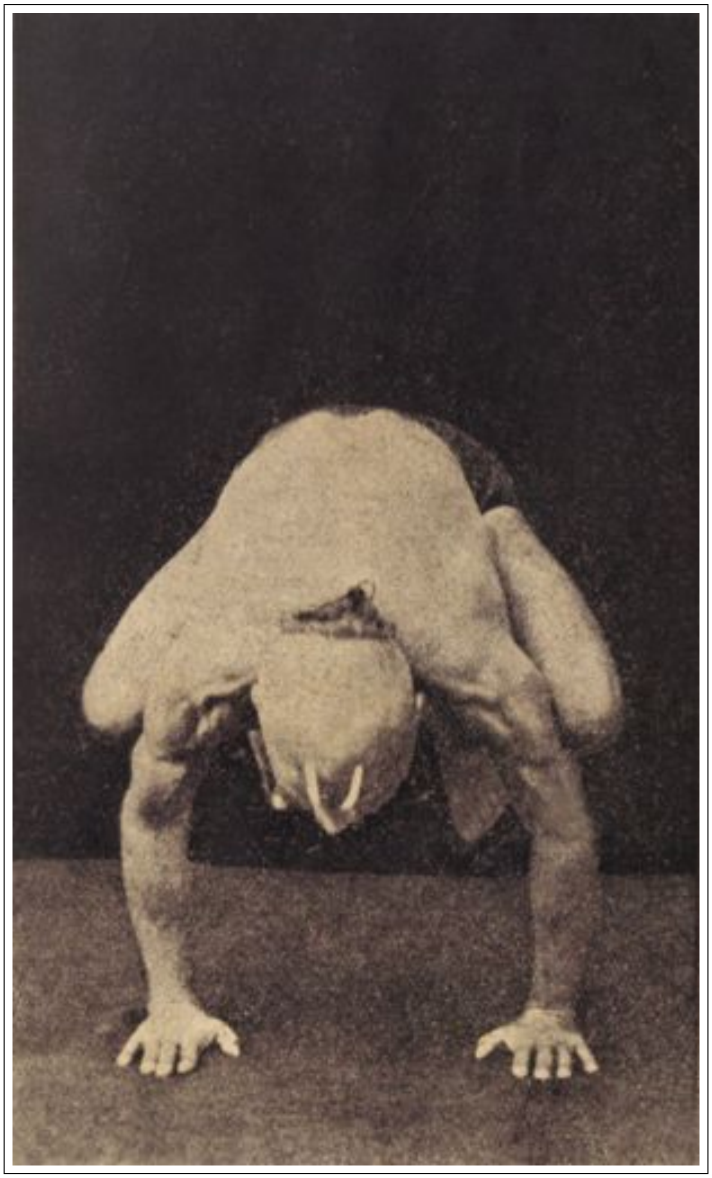


Figure 4.58: Bhujapidasana 3.

to the 7th *vinyasa* and hug the shoulders with the legs as shown in the picture. In the 8th and 9th *vinyasas*, take the legs back in between the shoulders, keeping them centred, and remain in this position using the strength of the shoulders. The hands must not move from the place where they are initially placed. The 7th, 8th and 9th *vinyasas* must be done only in *recaka*. While taking the legs towards the back in the 11th *vinyasa*, make sure that they do not touch the ground. The other *vinyasas* are like those for *pascimottanasana*.

Benefit: Not only does it give extraordinary strength to the shoulders, it removes various diseases of the heart and the brain. It maintains proper blood circulation in the neck and creates an easy and clear path for the *susumna nadi*.

If women practise primarily this *asana* doing times of menstruation, the disturbances and problems related to menstruation will disappear. This is a definite and easy way to obtain relief from problems of the stomach.

20 Navasana (Figure 4.59, 4.60)

This has 13 *vinyasas*. In this *asana*, we need to keep our bodies like a boat (look at the picture). In the 7th *vinyasa*, maintain the position observed in the picture. That is, only the seat on the back of the body must be on the floor and all the other parts of the body must be raised off the ground. Similarly raise both legs off the ground, keeping them extended. Extend the shoulders out in front, extend the arms forward and place the palms on each leg not quite touching the knees. This is called **paripurna navasana** (Figure 63).

In the 7th *vinyasa*, lie down just as in *supta padangushtasana*, raise the extended legs off the ground. Join the hands and interlace the fingers behind the neck, placing the head on the palms and hold the head tightly with the clasped hands. Then, as observed in the picture, raise the upper body halfway using the back and stop. This is called **ardha navasana** (Figure 64).

21 Bakasana (Figure 4.61)

This has 12 *vinyasas*. The 7th and 8th *vinyasas* are the *asana sthiti*. In the picture, only the 8th *vinyasa* is shown.

Benefit: This is an important means for the awakening of the *kundalini*. It also removes constipation.

22 Kurmasana (Figure 4.62)

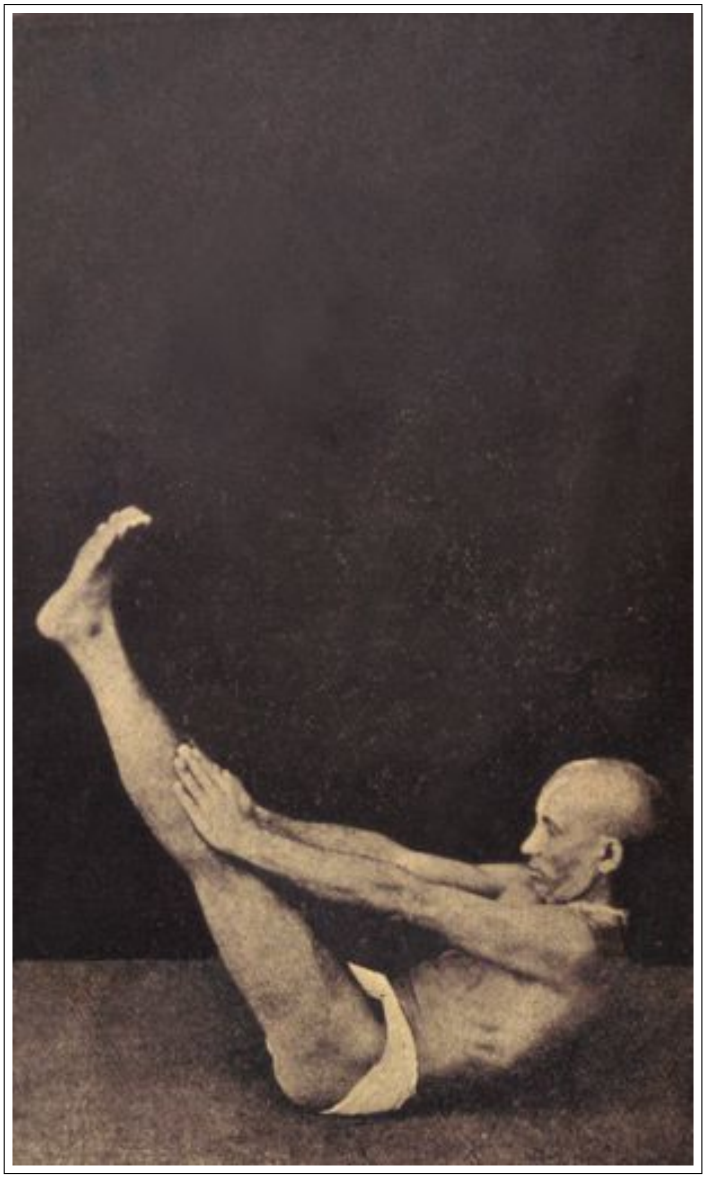


Figure 4.59: Paripurna Navasana



Figure 4.60: Ardha Navasana

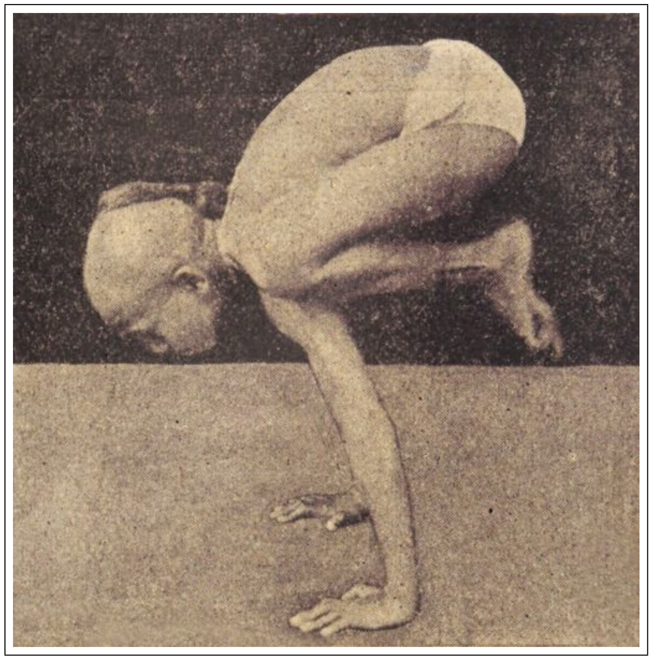


Figure 4.61: Bakasana



Figure 4.62: Kurmasana

This has 16 *vinyasas*. The 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th *vinyasas* demonstrate the *sampurna sthiti* of the *asana*. Only the 7th *vinyasa* is shown in the picture.

Benefit: The *apana vayu* is cleaned; nocturnal discharges are stopped. This is also a very good method for curing piles.

If women with irregular menstruation practise this *asana* with all the *vinyasas* for a few months, this affliction of the uterus and of menstrual disturbance will dissolve and they will have regular menstruation.

Important Rule: The practitioners of *kurmasana* must not practise it within 3 hours of eating. It must not be done on a full stomach.

23 Ubhaya Padangushtasana (Figure 4.63)

This has 14 *vinyasas*. The 8th *vinyasa* itself is the *asana sthiti*. Study the picture carefully. Pull in the stomach with the strength of complete *recaka* and hold it in this position. While doing this, keep the arms and legs extended. Keep the chin firmly pressed against the chest.

Benefit: Piles, indigestion, persistent cough, *anda vayu* (hydrocele) — these will be cured, and the body will be maintained in a good condition. Pregnant women should not do this.

24 Supta Konasana (Figure 4.64, 4.65)

This has 14 *vinyasas*. The 9th *vinyasa* is the *asana sthiti*. In the 7th *vinyasa*, stay as shown in the picture.

The 8th *vinyasa* is *uthpluthi*. From *uthpluthi*, move to the position shown in the second picture and then do *recaka*. The position shown in the second picture is the 9th *vinyasa*.

This 9th *vinyasa* itself is the *suptakonasana sthiti*. The 10th *vinyasa* is *caturanga dandasana*. The four remaining *vinyasas* are just the last four *vinyasas* of *pascimottanasana*. Study the picture very carefully. Remember that the stomach needs to be pulled in and held in.

Benefit: It will not allow sluggishness due to *mahodaram jadyam* (dropsy). It will cause timely expulsion of faeces. It will prevent the occurrence of goiter, of inflammation of the glands of the neck, and of any *kapha* diseases.

Suppose that a woman does not want any children. If she does this *asana* and along with this, practises *krounchasana*, then, as desired, she will not have any offspring. If women who have stomach pain during the time of menstruation practise this *asana* along with *upavishtakonasana* during the time of menstruation, the pain will disappear quickly.

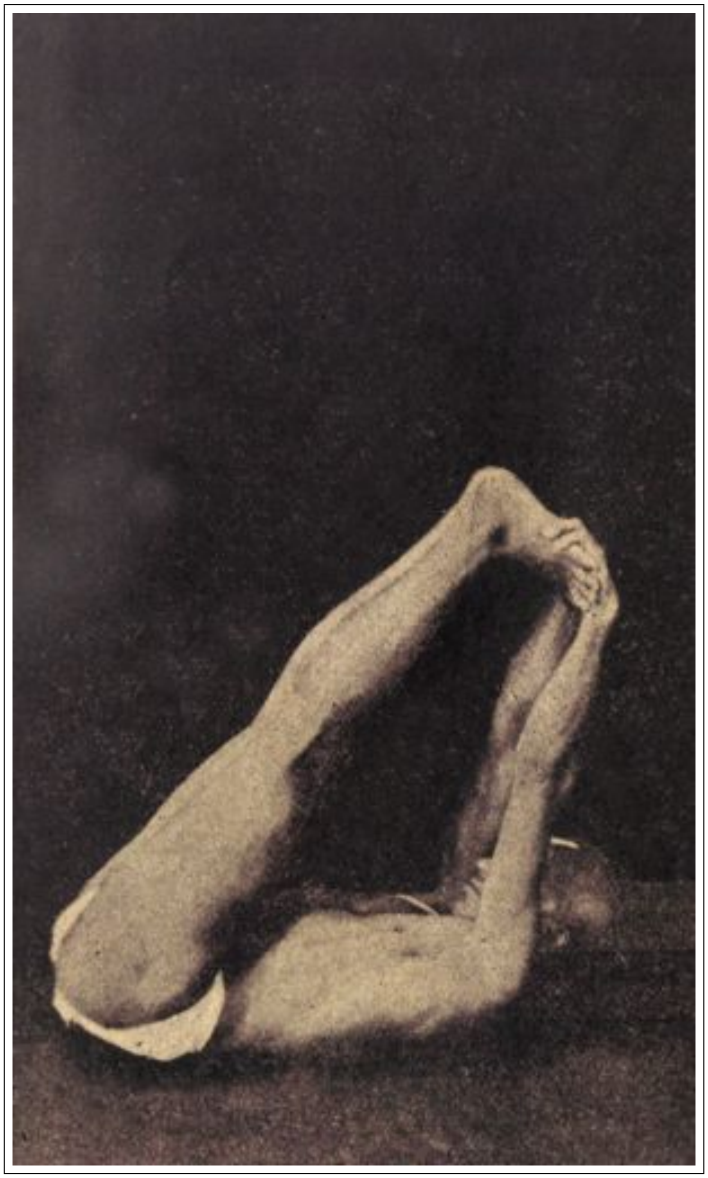


Figure 4.63: Ubhaya Padangushtasana

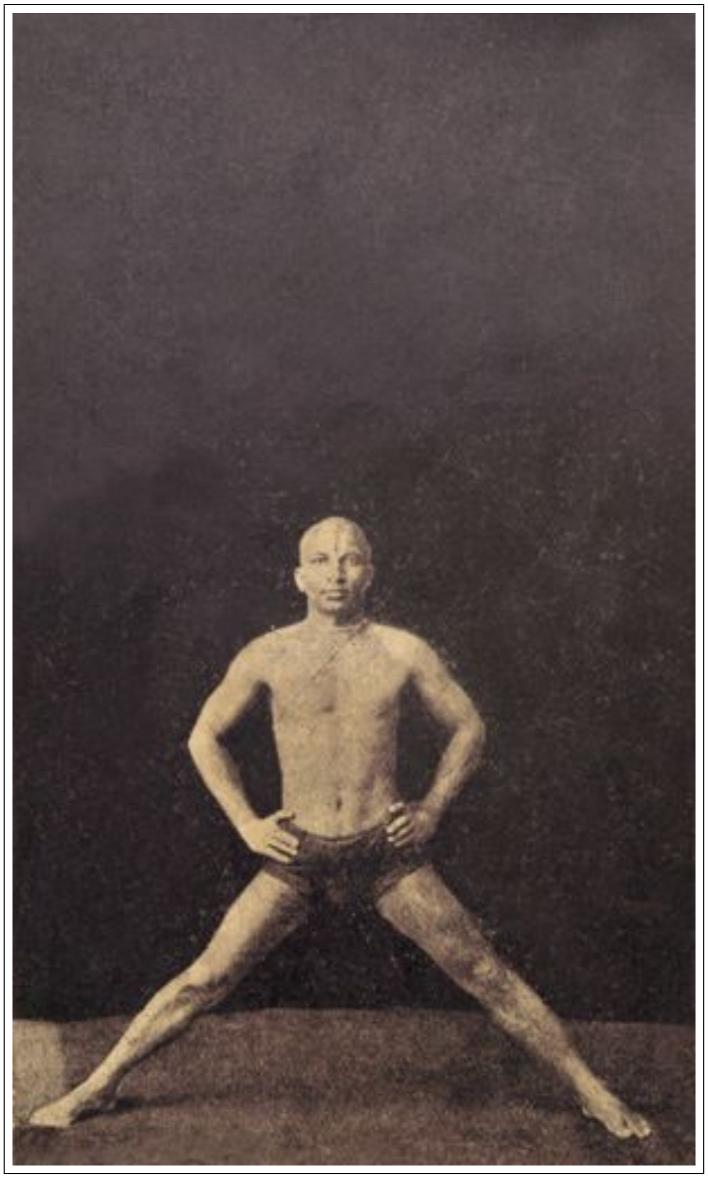


Figure 4.64: Supta Konasana Sthiti

25 Marichasana (Figure 4.66, 4.67, 4.68, 4.69)

This has 22 *vinyasas*. This needs to be done on both the left and the right sides. Study the *sannaha sthiti* (the preparatory state) of *marichasana* in the picture. This *sthiti* is the 7th *vinyasa*.

The right-side *marichasana paristhiti* is shown in the second picture. *Maricha Maharishi* was known for bringing this *asana* to public knowledge and hence it is named for him.

Stay in the 7th *vinyasa* for some time doing *puraka kumbhaka*. After this, do *recaka* and come to the 8th *vinyasa*. Stay in this position for as long as possible. In case your head starts reeling (you get dizzy), come back to the 7th *vinyasa*, do *puraka kumbhaka*, close the eyes and remain here for some time. The dizziness will stop.

The 9th *vinyasa* is like the 7th *vinyasa*. The 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th *vinyasas* are like the 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th *vinyasas* of *janusirsasana*.

The 14th *vinyasa* is *marichasana sannaha sthiti* on the left side. This is demonstrated in the 3rd picture. The 15th *vinyasa* is the left-side *marichasana paristhiti*. This is demonstrated in the 4th picture. In the 14th *vinyasa* do *puraka kumbhaka* and in the 15th *vinyasa* do only *recaka*. The 16th *vinyasa* is like the 14th. The 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, and 22nd *vinyasas* are like the 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, and 22nd *vinyasas* of *janusirsasana*.

Benefit: It will not give room for paralysis or any such diseases. Bloating of the stomach will quickly disappear. The stomach will not increase in size. It brings the hips to a correct measurement and broadens the chest. Any weakness of the heart will be removed and the heart will develop strength. The practitioner will never get jaundice or any other liver disease. Only pregnant women should not do this posture.

26 Niralamba Sarvangasana (Figure 4.70)

This has 14 *vinyasas*. The 8th *vinyasa* is the *asana sthiti*. The form depicted in the picture is the 8th *vinyasa*. This is *niralamba sarvangasana paristhiti*. In order to get to this *sthiti*, slowly raise the arms and legs either together or one-by-one in the 7th *vinyasa* . Do only *recaka* at this time. Never do *puraka kumbhaka*.

At this time the chin should be pressed against the chest. The gaze should be fixed on the midbrow. While doing this, the arms and legs must not be bent. This *sarvangasana* has two forms — **salamba** and **niralamba**. The tradition of Kapila Maharishi *matham* has two types for each of these. This book follows the first form. Hence, the picture shows only the first type.

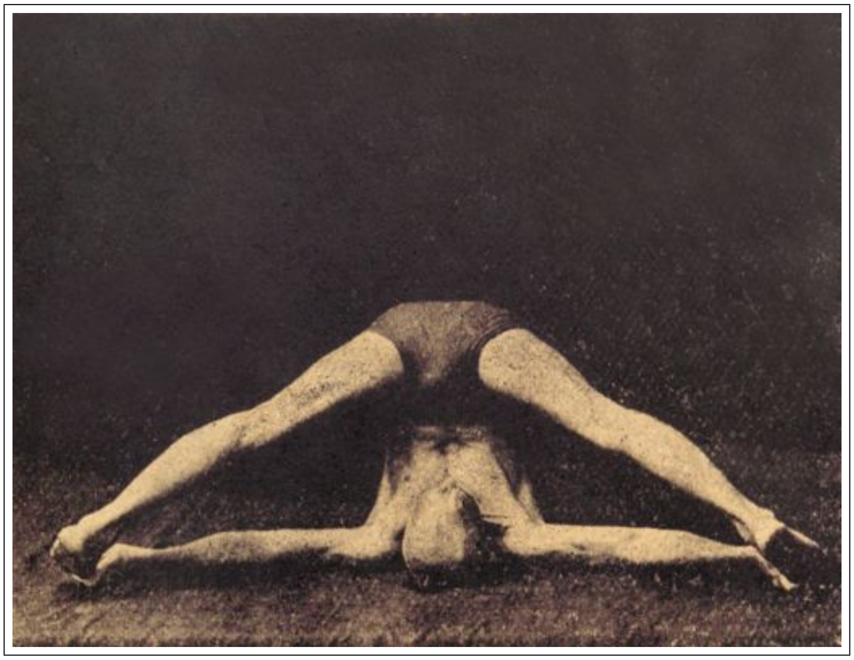


Figure 4.65: Supta Konasana



Figure 4.66: Marichasana Sannaha Sthiti - Right side 1.



Figure 4.67: Marichasana Paristhiti - Right side 2.



Figure 4.68: Marichasana Sannaha Sthiti - Left side 3.

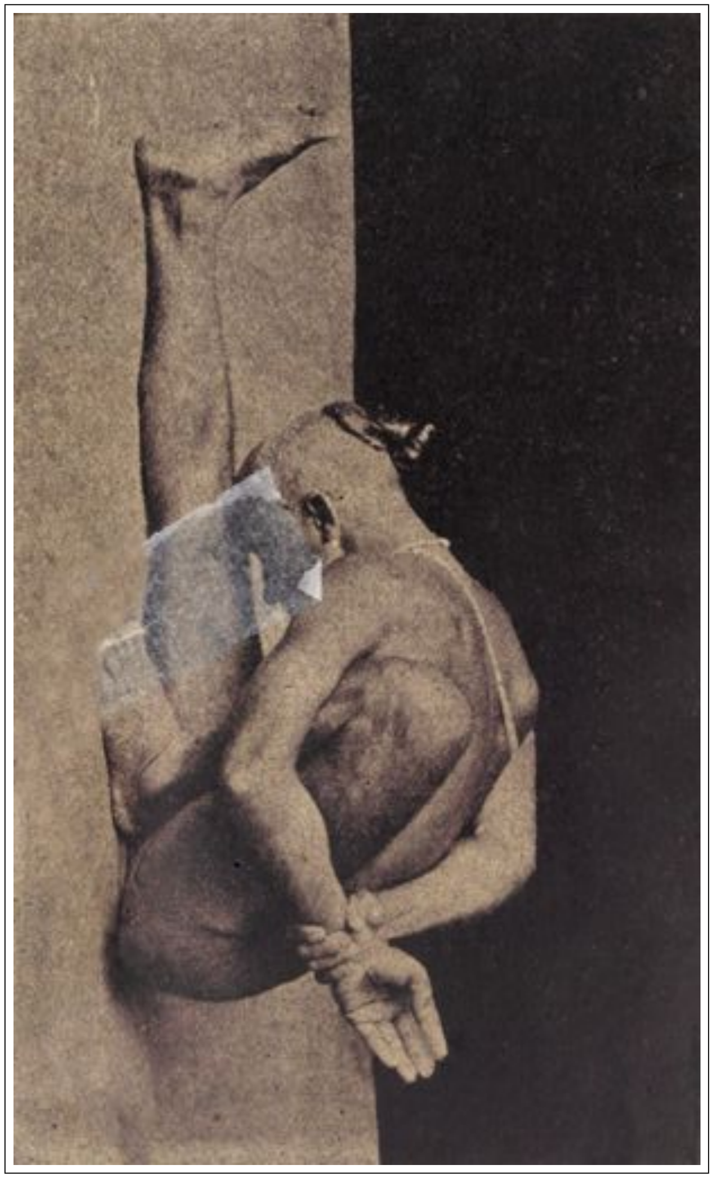


Figure 4.69: Marichasana Paristhiti - Left side 4.



Figure 4.70: Niralamba Sarvangasana

Benefit: Stomach pain, violent stomach pain, flatulence, and indigestion due to changes in diet will be removed and the stomach will become slim. If a person who is having trouble sleeping properly at night remains in the *asana paristhiti* for fifteen minutes and then lies down, they will be able to fall into a sound contented sleep. Whoever has chest pain, discharges during dreams, is tired, or is suffering as a result of walking for long distances — if these people practise *niralamba sarvangasana* with its *vinyasas* for some time, then all these problems will be cured and they will become content. Women can do this even if they get pregnant but should not do it after the 4th month.

27 Ekapada Sirsasana (Figure 4.71, 4.72)

This has two forms: **dakshina ekapada sirsasana** and **vama ekapada sirsasana**. Both these forms together have 18 *vinyasas*. The first picture depicts *dakshina ekapada sirsasana* and the second picture *vama ekapada sirsasana*. The 7th and 12th *vinyasas* are the *asana sthitis* of these different forms. For this *asana*, you need to do *sama svasauchvasam* (same ratio breathing). In the 7th *vinyasa*, the left leg, and in the 12th *vinyasa* the right leg, should be extended and kept straight from the thigh to the heel. No part should be bent.

Keep the hands as shown in the picture. In this *sthiti* one needs to do equal ratio breathing. When the hands are joined together in *ekapada sirsasana paristhiti*, one must do *puraka kumbhaka*. One must never do *recaka*.

While doing the 7th and the 12th *vinyasas*, the head must be raised and the gaze must be fixed at the midbrow.

In the 7th *vinyasa*, the right leg, and in the 12th *vinyasa*, the left leg, must be placed on top of the back of the neck. Study the picture carefully. The other *vinyasas* are like those for *ardhabaddhapadma pascimottanasana*.

Benefit: This will arrest bleeding due to piles and give strength to the body. It removes *vayu* disturbances in the neck region and gives the neck extraordinary strength to carry excess weight. It is extremely helpful for the awakening of *kundalini*. Pregnant women should not do this posture.

28 Dvipada Sirsasana (Figure 4.73)

This has 14 *vinyasas*. It is the same as for *pascimottanasana* up to the 6th *vinyasa*. While practising the 7th *vinyasa*, place both legs on top of the shoulders, and do *uthpluthi* as in the 7th *vinyasa* for *bhujapidasana*. Then lean the rear of the body forward and sit down.

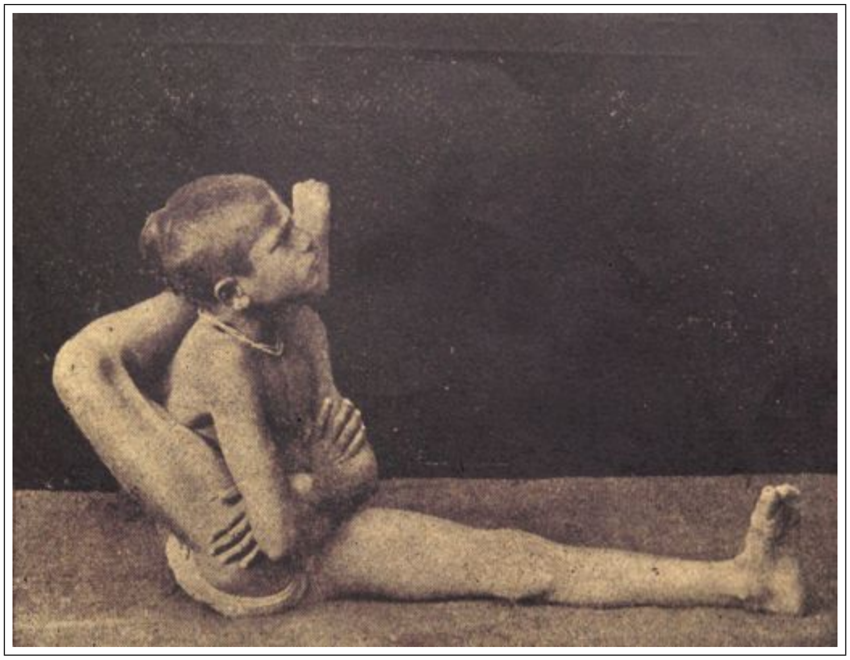


Figure 4.71: Dakshina Ekapada Sirsasana

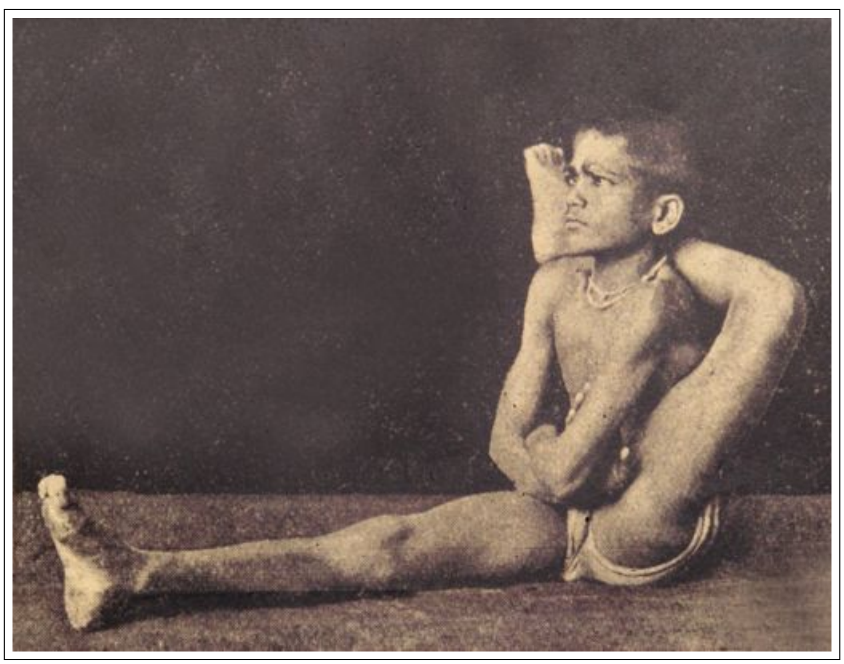


Figure 4.72: Vama Ekapada Sirsasana



Figure 4.73: Dvipada Sirsasana

After this, do *recaka* and slowly and carefully place the left foot on top of the right foot on top of the back of the neck. That is, the right heel should be by the left ear and the left heel should be by the right ear. While remaining in this state, do *puraka kumbhaka* and raise the head. Bring the hands next to the *muladhara cakra* and join them together in prayer. From the 8th *vinyasa* until the 14th *vinyasa* practise just as for *bhujapidasana*.

Benefit: It will remove diseases of the spleen, of the liver, and of the stomach. It will clean the *muladhara cakra*. It will greatly help with *uddiyana bandha*. Practise it after first studying the picture very carefully. Women who are pregnant should not do this posture. Those who are prone to miscarriage must practise this *asana* regularly for some time and then discontinue it before they conceive. If they stop practising this *asana* during pregnancy, it will enable a strong healthy birth and will help the uterus wall expand and be healthy. People who do not wish for progeny must always practise this *asana*. If they do, then they will not have any children.

29 Yoga Nidrasana (Figure 4.74)

This has 12 *vinyasas*. The 7th *vinyasa* is *yoga nidrasana sthiti*. The first 6 *vinyasas* for *kurmasana* are the first 6 *vinyasas* for this. In the 7th *vinyasa*, sit like you did in *dvipada sirsasana* and instead of keeping the two legs on the back of the neck, first lie back facing upwards. Then lift the legs up and place them on the back of the neck.

In *dvipada sirsasana*, we joined the hands together in prayer and placed them next to the *muladhara cakra*. In this *asana*, following the *krama*, take the shoulders (that is, the arms) on both the left and right sides over the top of the two thighs, and hold the right wrist tightly with the fingers of the left hand beneath the spine. Study the picture.

In the 7th *vinyasa*, after doing only *recaka*, arrive at the *asana sthiti*. Then, one should do *puraka kumbhaka* and lie down. The 8th *vinyasa* is *caturanga dandasana*. The last four *vinyasas* for this *asana* are exactly the last four *vinyasas* for *pascimottanasana*.

Benefit: Tuberculosis, bloating of the stomach, dropsy and edema (swelling of tissue due to accumulation of water) — such serious diseases will be cured. It will cause the *vayu* to be held at the *svadhishthana cakra* and the *brahmara guha cakra* and as a result will cause long life. It will help to rapidly bring the *apana vayu* under one's control. It is not for women who are pregnant.

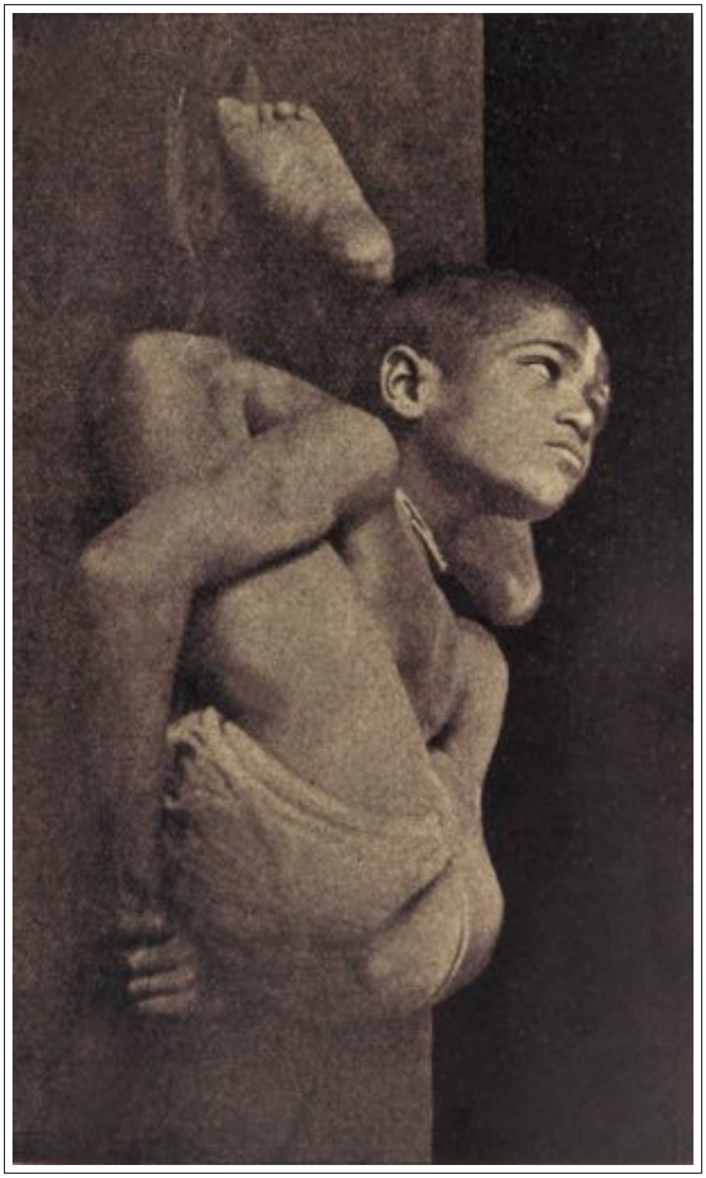


Figure 4.74: Yoga Nidrasana

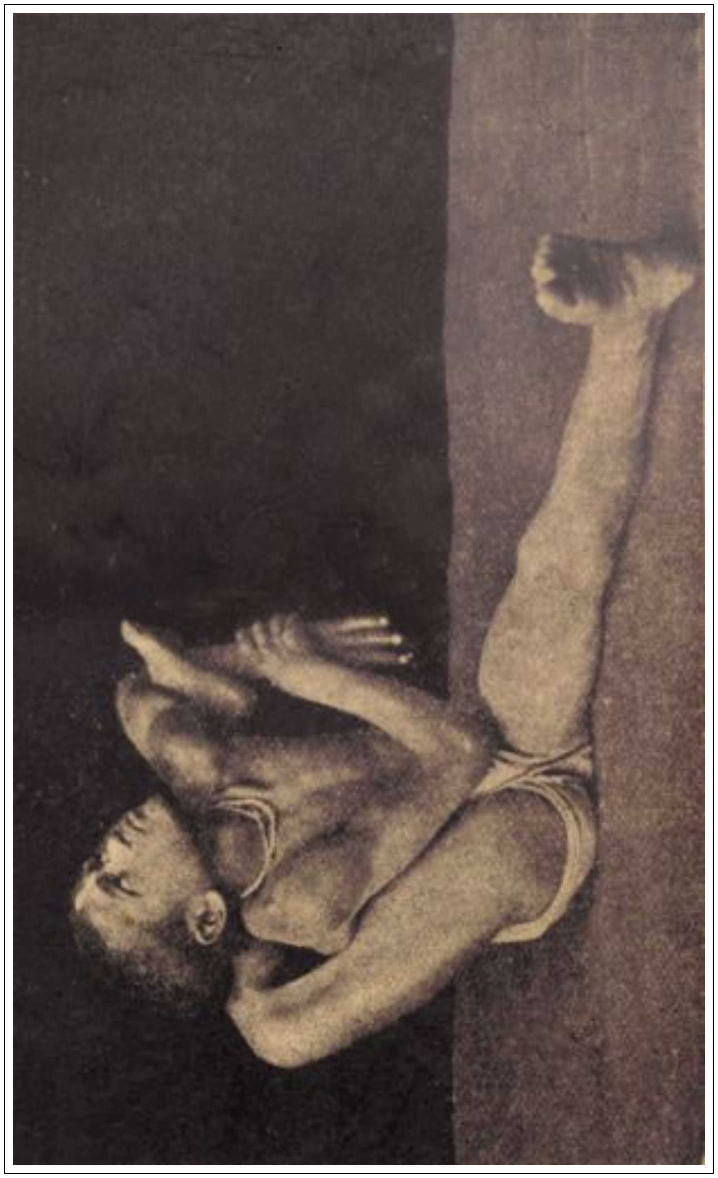


Figure 4.75: Buddhasana 1. — Right-side

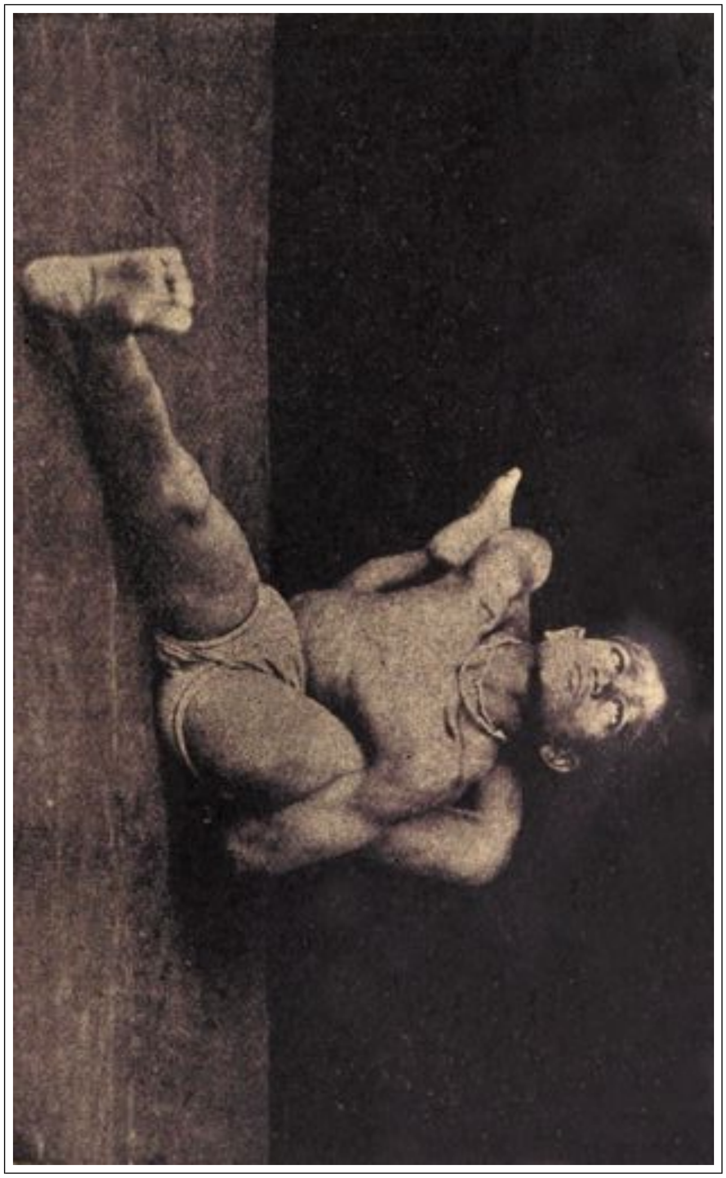


Figure 4.76: Buddhasana. 2. — Left-side

30 Buddhasana (Figure 4.75, 4.76)

This has 20 *vinyasas*. The 8th and the 14th *vinyasas* are the right and left side *asana sthitis*.

The first picture demonstrates the right-side *buddhasana* and the second picture demonstrates the left-side *buddhasana*.

The 7th *vinyasa* of the right-side *buddhasana* is the 13th *vinyasa* of the left-side *buddhasana*. These are like the 7th and the 12th *vinyasas* of *ekapada sirsasana*.

While doing the 8th *vinyasa*, it is just like the 7th *vinyasa* for *ekapada sirsasana*. Study the picture carefully.

The 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, and 13th *vinyasas* for this are just like the 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th *vinyasas* for *ekapada sirsasana*. The 14th *vinyasa* is the left-side *buddhasana sthiti*. In this *sthiti*, take the left leg over the top part of the left shoulder and place it on top of the back of the neck. Then hold the wrist of the right hand with the left hand. A different form of *buddhasana sthiti* is depicted in the second picture and here the hands are clasped together behind the back. The practitioners need not be surprised by this. Some think that since Buddha advocated *siddhasana* as superior to any other *asana*, hence *siddhasana* and *buddhasana* are to be practised in a similar manner. This is contrary to all the yoga texts and their descriptions of the connections among the *nadi granthis* in the body. Hence, the practitioner must understand that the *siddhasana krama* and *buddhasana krama* are different and must be practised accordingly.

Benefit: It will cure hunchback and will create proper blood circulation in all the *nadis*. It will clean the *svadhishthana*, *anahata*, *visuddhi* and *brahmara guha cakras* and gives complete assistance for *kevala kumbhaka*.

This asana is very beneficial for curing long-term persistent fever. Pregnant women should not do this.

31 Kapilasana (Figure 4.77)

This has 24 *vinyasas*. *Kapila Maharishi* discovered this and because he helped spread its practice, it came to be called *kapilasana*.

The right-side *kapilasana* is the 9th *vinyasa* and the left-side *kapilasana* is the 17th *vinyasa*.

Up to the 8th *vinyasa* follow the *buddhasana krama*. Then, as though you are doing *pascimottanasana*, place the chin on top of the bones of the front of the knee of the extended leg. Do *recaka* in this *sthiti*.

The 10th to the 14th *vinyasas* are just like the 10th to the 14th *vinyasas* of *pascimottanasana*. But until you complete the 10th and 11th *vinyasas*, the right

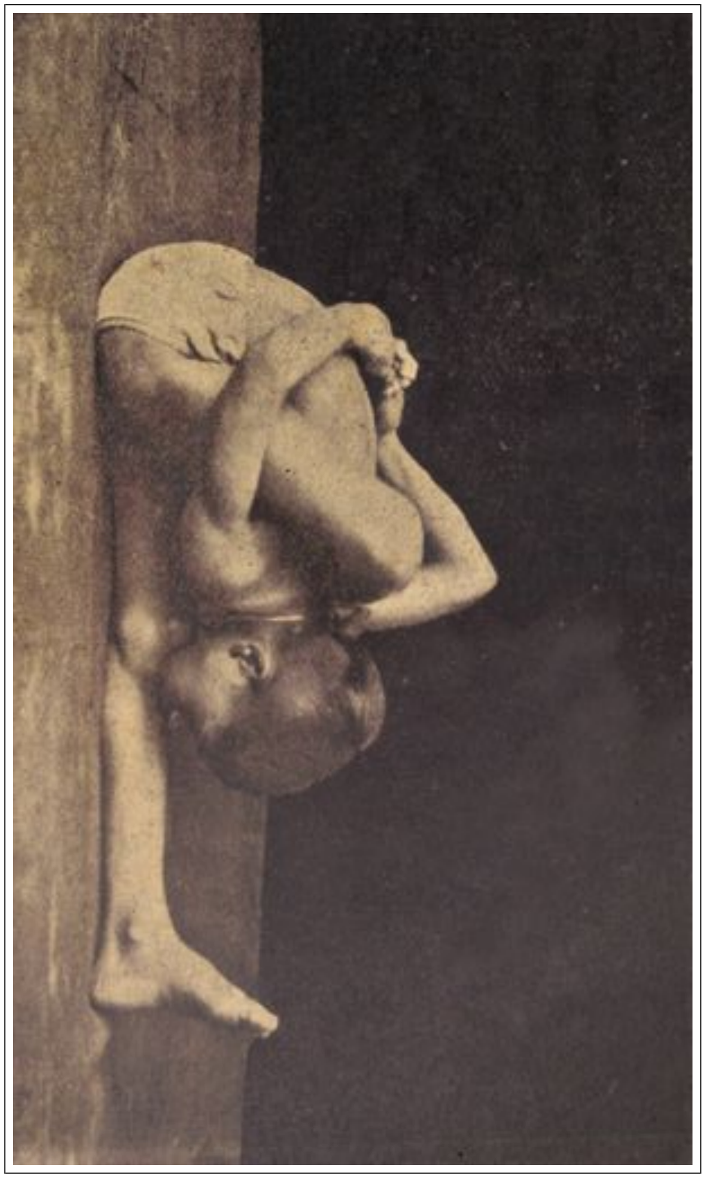


Figure 4.77: Kapilasana

leg must remain on top of the back of the neck. In the 10th *vinyasa*, the hands must be clasped together behind the back.

The 15th and 16th *vinyasas* are like the 13th and 14th *vinyasas* for the left-side *buddhasana*. The 17th *vinyasa* is the left-side *kapilasana sthiti*. The 18th to the 22nd *vinyasas* are like the 10th to the 14th *vinyasas* of right-side *kapilasana*. The 23rd and 24th *vinyasas* are to be done like the 15th and 16th *vinyasas* of *pascimottanasana*.

Benefit: It will maintain the *muladhara, svadhishthana, manipuraka, anahata*, and *visuddhi cakras* in the proper *sthiti*. It is extremely helpful in guiding one along the path of *dharana* and *dhyana*.

32 Bhairavasana (Figure 4.78)

This has 20 *vinyasas*. The 8th and the 14th *vinyasas* are the right and left side *asana sthitis*.

From the 1st until the 7th *vinyasa*, follow the method for *ekapada sirsasana*. In the 8th *vinyasa*, instead of keeping the hands at the *muladhara cakra* (as in *ekapada sirsasana*), hug both arms together tightly as seen in the picture and lie down looking upwards. While remaining here, do *puraka kumbhaka*, raise the neck upwards and gaze at the midbrow. The 15th to the 20th *vinyasas* are like those for *kapilasana*. This *asana* must be practised on both sides.

Since Kalabhairava was responsible for the spread of the practice of this *asana*, it came to be called *bhairavasana*.

Benefit: Keeps *vayu sancharam* in equal and proper balance in the *ida*, *pingala* and *susumna nadis* and prevents any *vata* disease from approaching. Pregnant women should not do this. But those women who do not wish for any children, if they practise this *asana* regularly following the rules for a period of time, they will definitely never conceive. Of this there is absolutely no doubt. Practising this *asana* will close the uterine passage and stop the fertilization from taking place.

33 Cakorasana (Figure 4.79)

This has 20 *vinyasas*. This is from the Kapila Matham.

After observing that this follows the form of flight of the *cakora* bird, this came to be called *cakorasana*. In the Dhyana Bindu Upanishad, Parameshwara advises Parvati that "There are as many *asanas* as there are living beings in the world". We readers must always remember this.

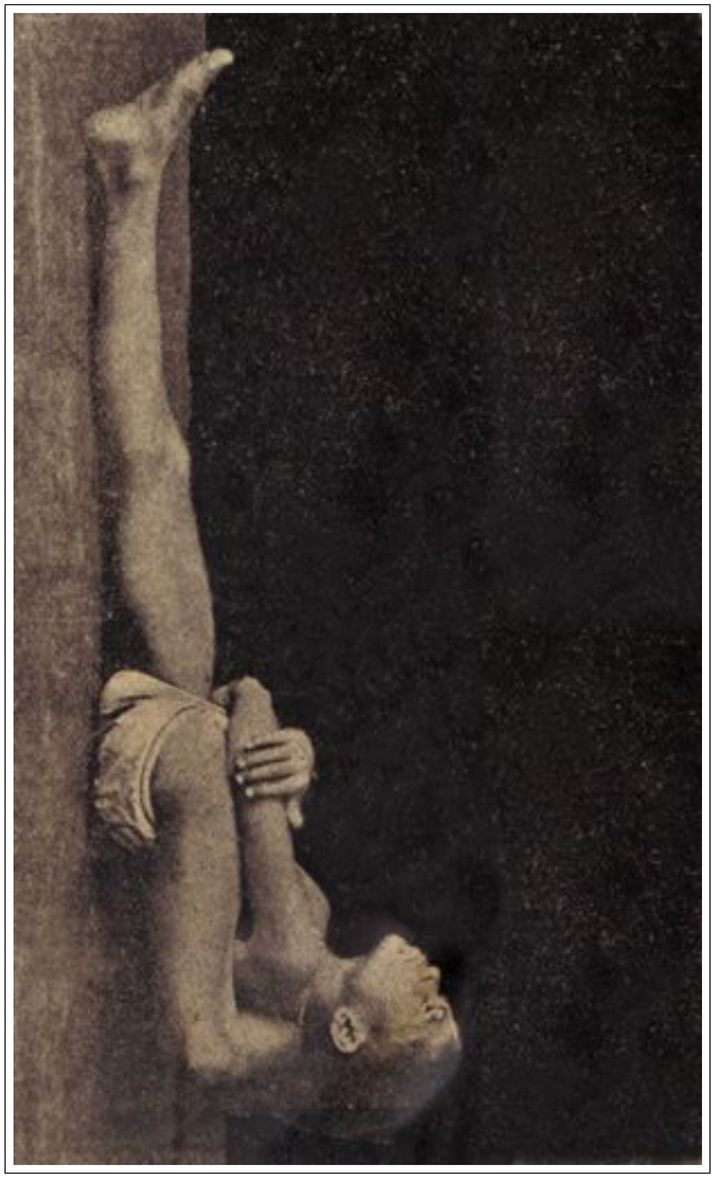


Figure 4.78: Bhairavasana



Figure 4.79: Cakorasana

The 8th and 14th *vinyasas* are this *asana's sthitis*. The 7th and the 13th *vinyasas* are like the 7th and the 13th *vinyasas* of *ekapada sirsasana*. In the 8th and the 14th *vinyasas*, press the palms of the hand firmly into the ground, do *puraka kumbhaka*, raise the body 6 *angulas* off the ground and hold it there. Carefully study the picture where this is demonstrated. Keep the gaze fixed on the midbrow. The other *vinyasas* are like those of *bhairavasana*.

Benefit: Diseases causing tremors (trembling) in the joints of the arm and in the wrists will be cured. Pregnant women should not do this.

34 Skandasana (Figure 4.80, 4.81)

This has 20 *vinyasas*. The 8th and the 14th *vinaysas* show the *asana sthiti*. The other *vinaysas* are exactly as for *cakorasana*. In *pascimottanasana*, we hold the big toes with the fingers of the hands as we place the face down on the knees. In this *asana*, instead of doing that, extend the arms out further forward, clasp the hands together in the manner of prayer, slowly bend the body forward and place the face down in front of the kneecap. You must do *recaka* in this *sthiti*. The gaze must be fixed on the midbrow.

There are two forms to be followed in the different *vinyasa kramas* for the left and right-side when doing *skandasana*. The first picture depicts the right-side *skandasana sthiti* and the 2nd picture depicts the left-side *skandasana sthiti*. According to the *sastras*, Parvati's son Skandan learned this *asana* from Parameshwara. Since Skandan spread the practice of this *asana*, it is called *skandasana*.

Benefit: Gives the skill of *pratyahara* through the knowledge of the light of the self shining in the crevasses of the heart.

35 Durvasasana (Figure 4.82)

This has 20 *vinyasas*. The 8th *vinyasa* is right-side *durvasasana* and the 14th *vinyasa* is left-side *durvasasana*. In the 7th and the 13th *vinyasas* stay in *ekapada sirsasana sthiti*. From there, in the 8th and the 14th *vinyasas*, get up and stand. Study the picture carefully. While remaining in this *asana sthiti*, the leg that is being supported on the ground must not be even slightly bent and must be held straight. Keep the gaze fixed at the middle of the nose. You must do *sampurna puraka kumbhaka*. The head must be properly raised throughout.

All the other *vinyasas* are like *skandasana*.

Benefit: Elephantiasis, *vayu* in the scrotum, trembling and tremors of the head — these serious diseases will be destroyed. It is a tremendous support on the path towards *samadhi*. Pregnant women should not do this.



Figure 4.80: Skandasana 1.



Figure 4.81: Skandasana 2.



Figure 4.82: Durvasasana

36 Richikasana (Figure 4.83, 4.84)

This has 24 *vinyasas*. The 9th and the 17th *vinyasas* are the *richikasana sthiti*. The 7th and 15th *vinyasas* are like *ekapada sirsasana*. The rest of the *vinyasas* are like *cakorasana*.

The first picture shows the right-side *richikasana* and the second picture show the left-side *richikasana*.

In the beginning of the 7th *vinyasa*, remain in *ekapada sirsasana*. In the 8th *vinyasa*, practise following the rules for the first *vinyasa* of *uttanasana*. The 9th *vinyasa* is like the 2nd *vinyasa* for *uttanasana*. The 9th *vinyasa* has been demonstrated in the picture. While remaining in this *sthiti*, the legs and arms that are supported on the ground should not be even slightly bent. Only *recaka* must be done.

The 10th *vinyasa* is like the 8th. The 11th, 12th, 13th, and 14th *vinyasas* are like the other *vinyasas* for *kapilasana* except for the *kapilasana sthiti*. The left-side *richikasana*, in the 15th, 16th and 17th *vinyasa* is done following the rules for the right-side *richikasana* in the 7th, 8th and 9th *vinyasas*. As mentioned earlier, *recaka* must be done in the *asana sthiti*.

Benefit: It corrects the *recaka* that is essential for the practice of *pranayama*.

37 Trivikramasana (Figure 4.85)

This has 7 *vinyasas*. From the 1st to the 5th *vinyasas* and then the 7th *vinyasa*, practise following those for *utthita hasta padangushtasana*. Practise the 2nd and 7th *vinyasas* as shown in the picture (study it carefully) and remain in these positions. The 2nd *vinyasa* is the right-side *trivikramasana sthiti*. The 6th *vinyasa* as shown is the left-side *trivikramasana sthiti*. The picture shown here only demonstrates the left-side *trivikramasana*. It is important that equal *recaka* and *puraka kumbhaka* must be carefully observed while practising this *asana*. Keep the gaze fixed on the midbrow. Both legs must be held straight and must not lean or bend to any side.

Benefit: Not only will it maintain the body in an equal balanced *sthiti*, it will rapidly awaken *kundalini*.

38 Gandabherundasana (Figure 4.86, 4.87)

This has 10 *vinyasas*. The 6th and 7th *vinyasas* show the *asana sthiti*. The first picture shows the 6th *vinyasa* and the second picture shows the 7th. In the

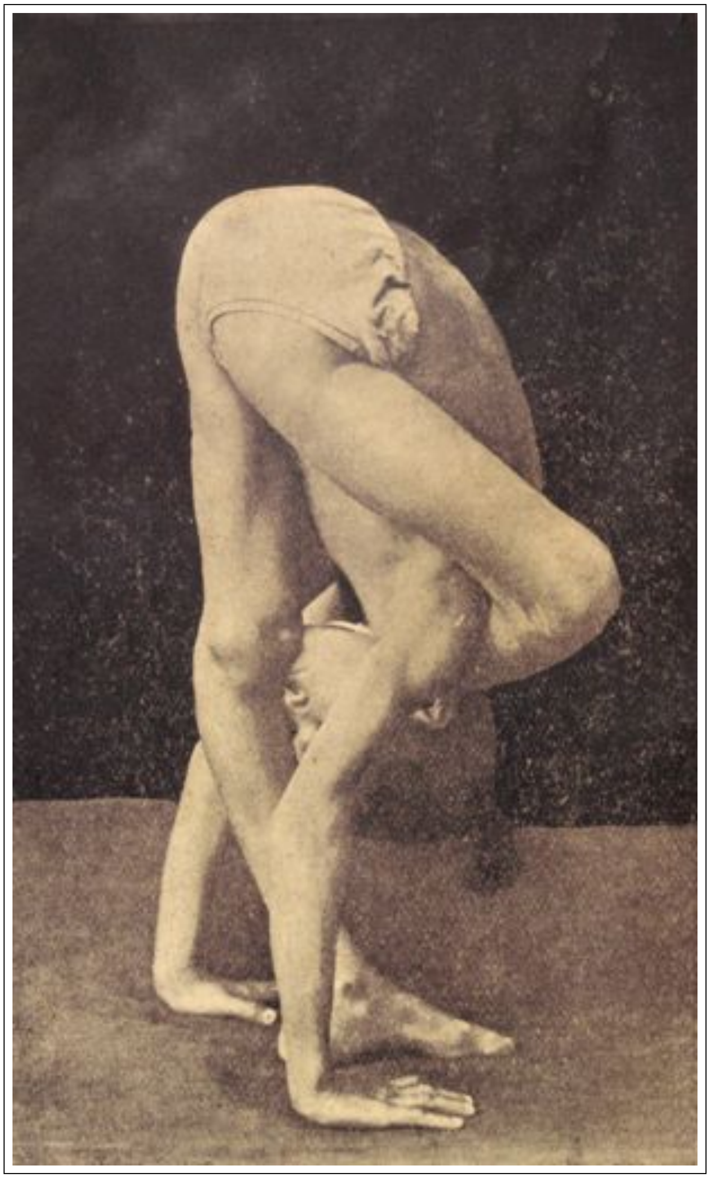


Figure 4.83: Richikasana 1.

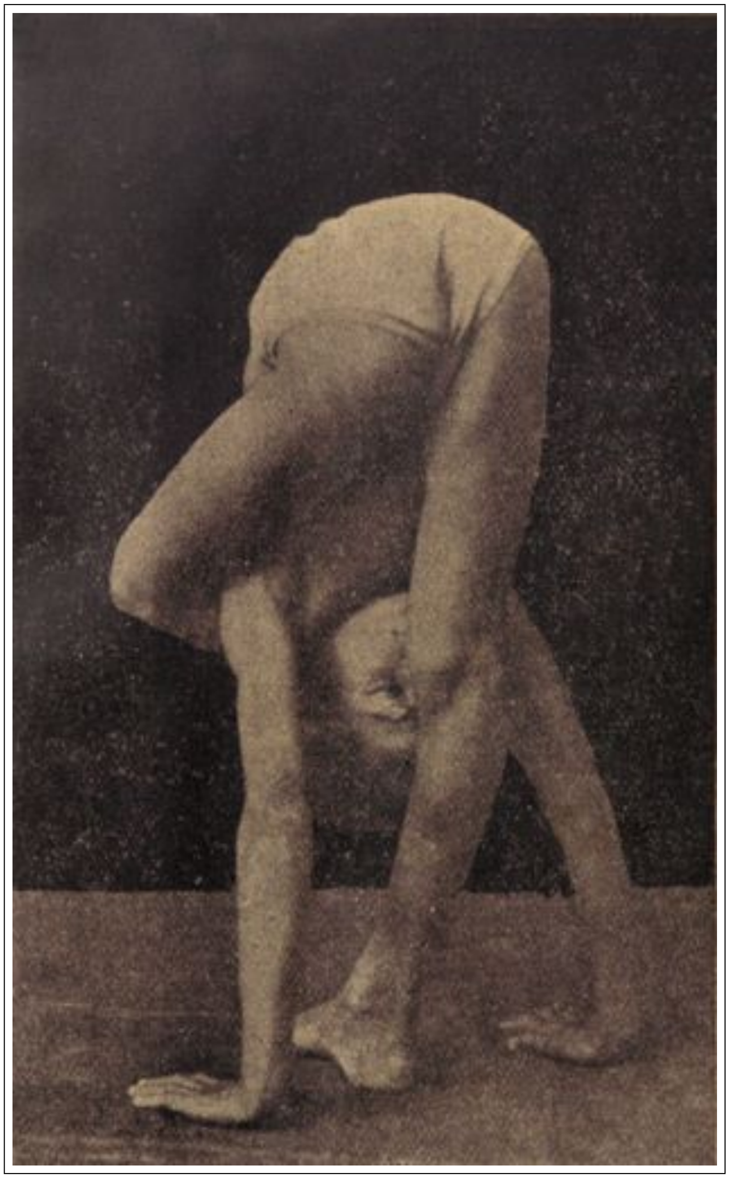


Figure 4.84: Richikasana 2.

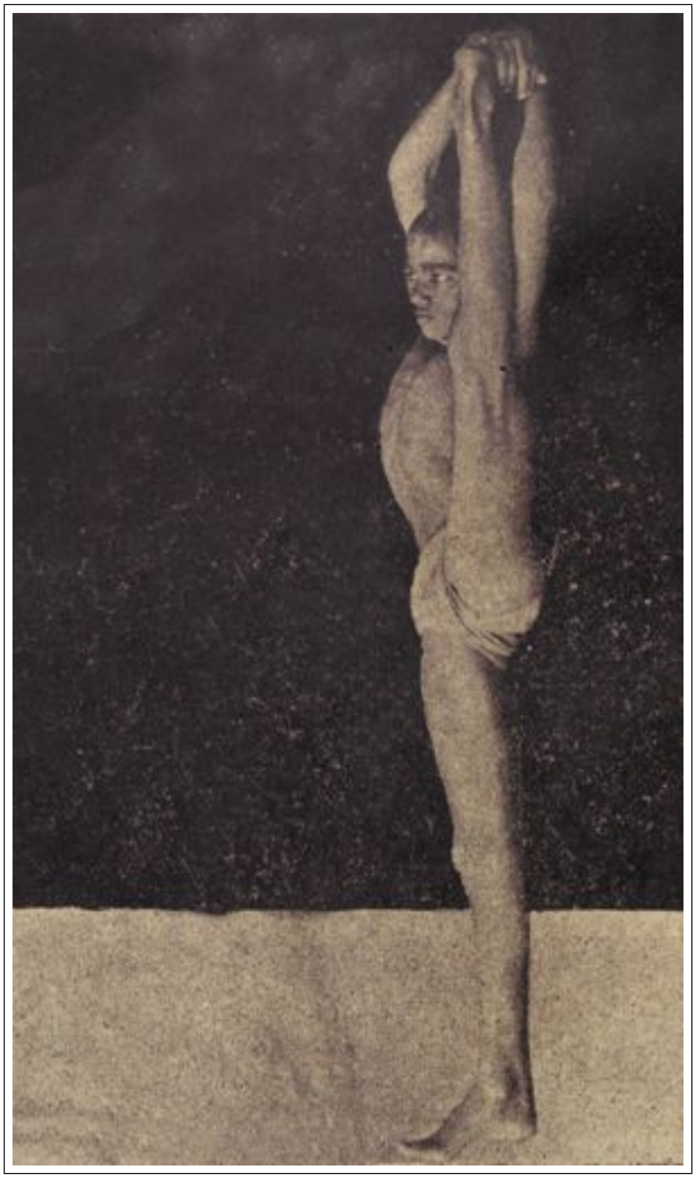


Figure 4.85: Trivikramasana

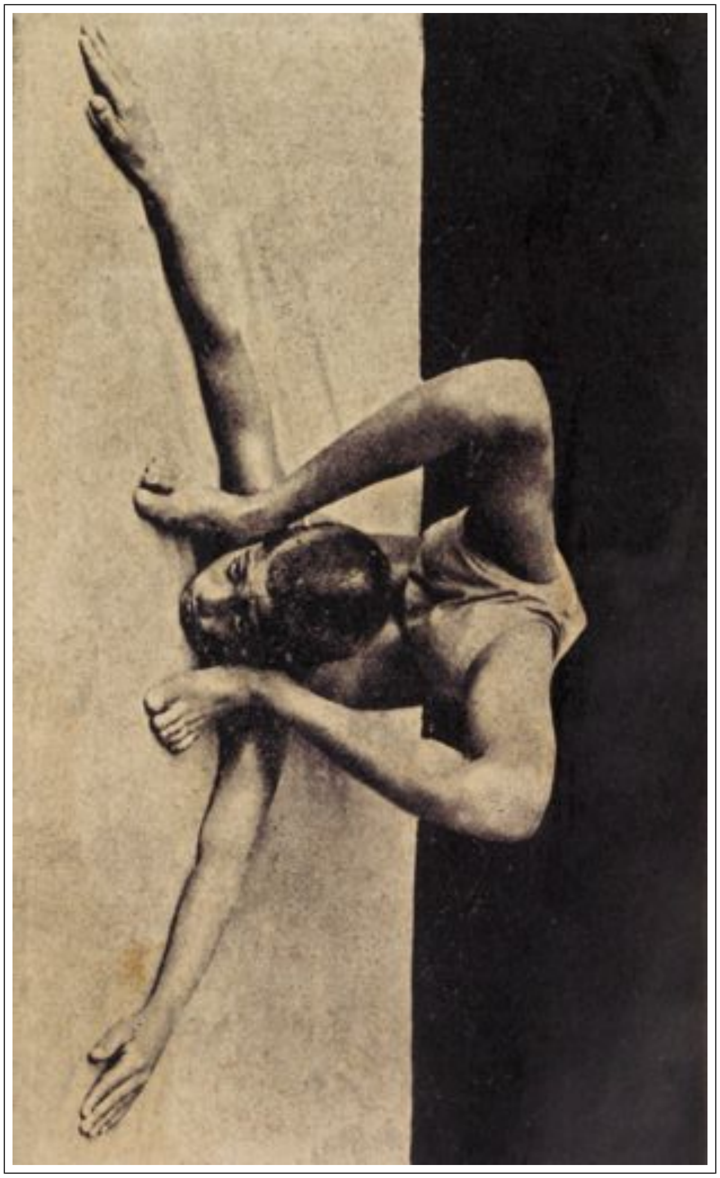


Figure 4.86: Gandabherundasana 1.

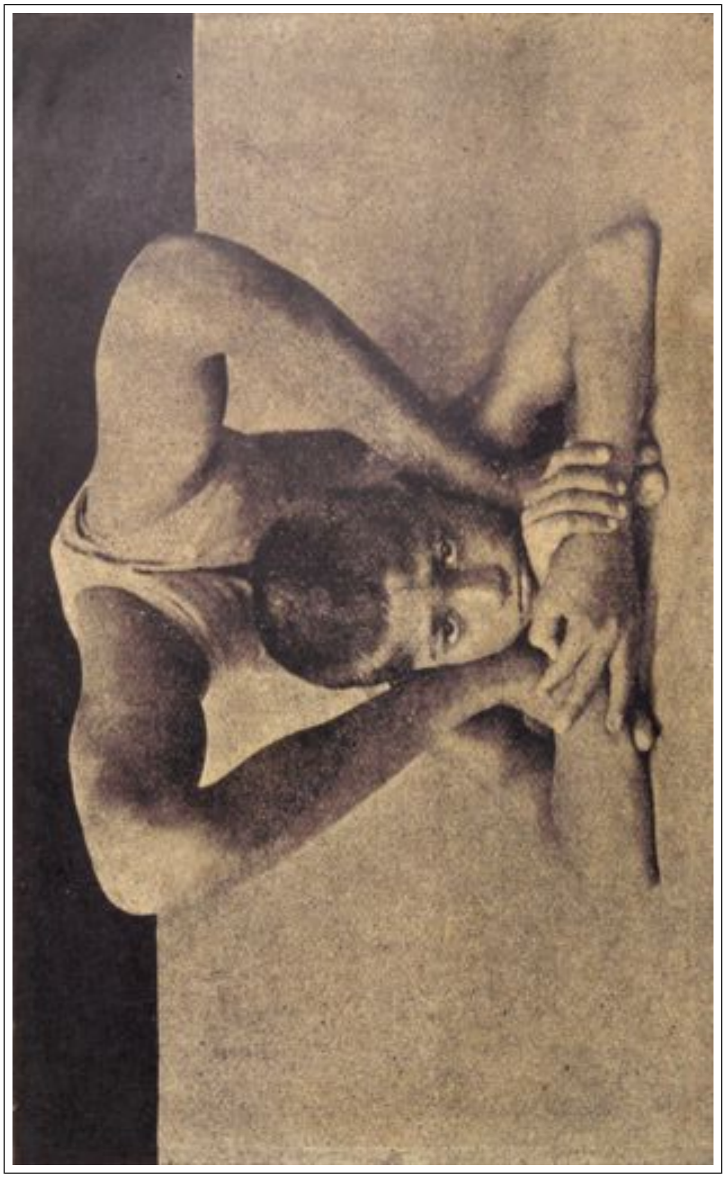


Figure 4.87: Gandabherundasana 2.

4th *vinyasa*, come to *caturanga dandasana sthiti* and in the 5th *vinyasa* proceed to *viparita salabasana sthiti*. In the 6th *vinyasa*, spread the arms out wide, keeping them straight like a stick (like a wire) as shown in the picture. Take the soles of both feet and place them next to the ears such that the heels touch the arms and keep them there.

Next, do the 7th *vinyasa* as shown in the second picture. This is called *supta ganda bherundasana*. In this *asana sthiti* and in the preliminary positions, do equal *recaka puraka kumbhaka*. Keep the gaze fixed on the midbrow. This must not be forgotten.

Benefit: Goiter, inflammation of the glands of the neck and diseases due to *mahodaram* will be destroyed. The *visuddhi* and *brahmaguha cakras* will function correctly and this will take the mind to the state of *savikalpa samadhi*. Pregnant women should not do this.

39 Tadasana (Figure 4.88)

This has 2 *vinyasas*. Stand as seen in the picture for fifteen minutes daily. Make this a habit. It will create new energy in the body and a vigour in the walk and will increase the digestive power. Not only that, it cleans the *rudra nadi* and increases the life-span. While doing this *asana*, follow *sama svasam* (equal breath).

Practise this *asana* every day at sunrise while worshipping *surya bhagavan*. If one practises this daily, it will definitely increase the life-span.

40 Halasana (Figure 4.89)

This has 12 *vinyasas*. The 8th *vinyasa* is the *asana sthiti*.

41 Mayurasana (Figure 4.90)

This has 9 *vinyasas*. The 5th *vinyasa* itself is the *asana sthiti*. This *asana* has two forms. One form is called **sampurna mayurasana**. The second is called one-handed *mayurasana*. The picture included here depicts only *sampurna mayurasana*. In this *asana*, both hands should be firmly pressed down on the ground and with the strength of the arms, the whole body should be balanced like a bar in a balance scale with both sides at the same level.

In the other type of *mayurasana*, keep only one hand on the ground and balance the body on this hand as mentioned above. Ordinarily, most people

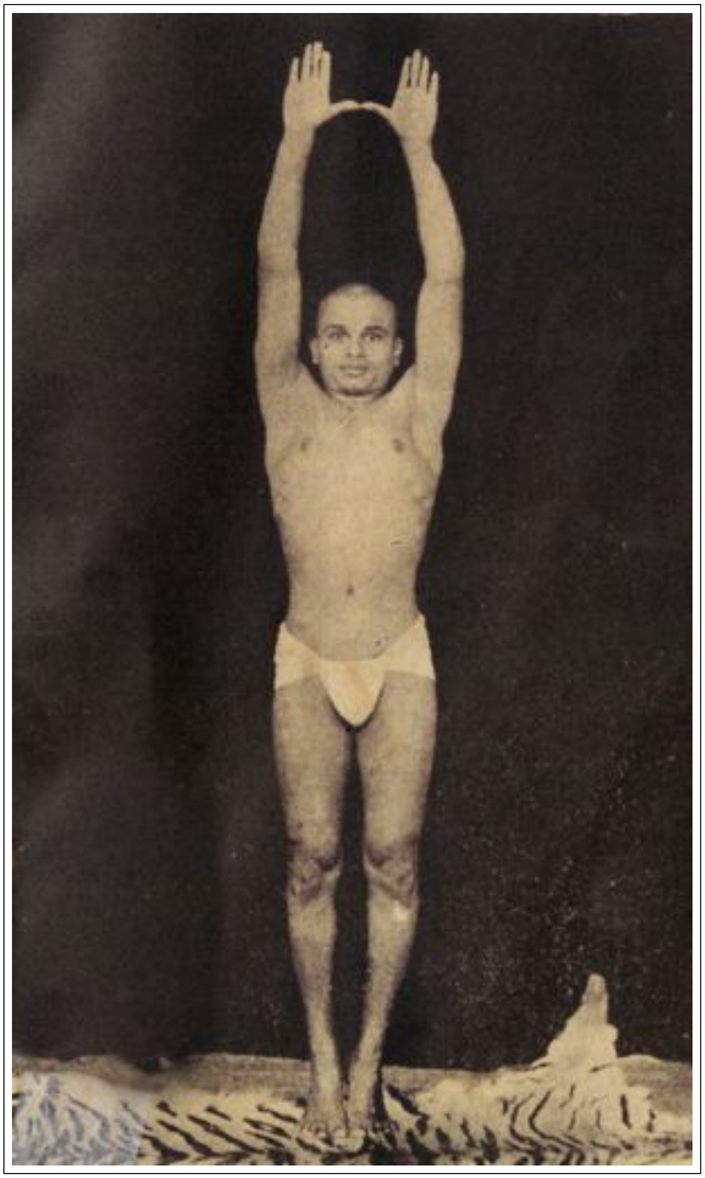


Figure 4.88: Tadasana

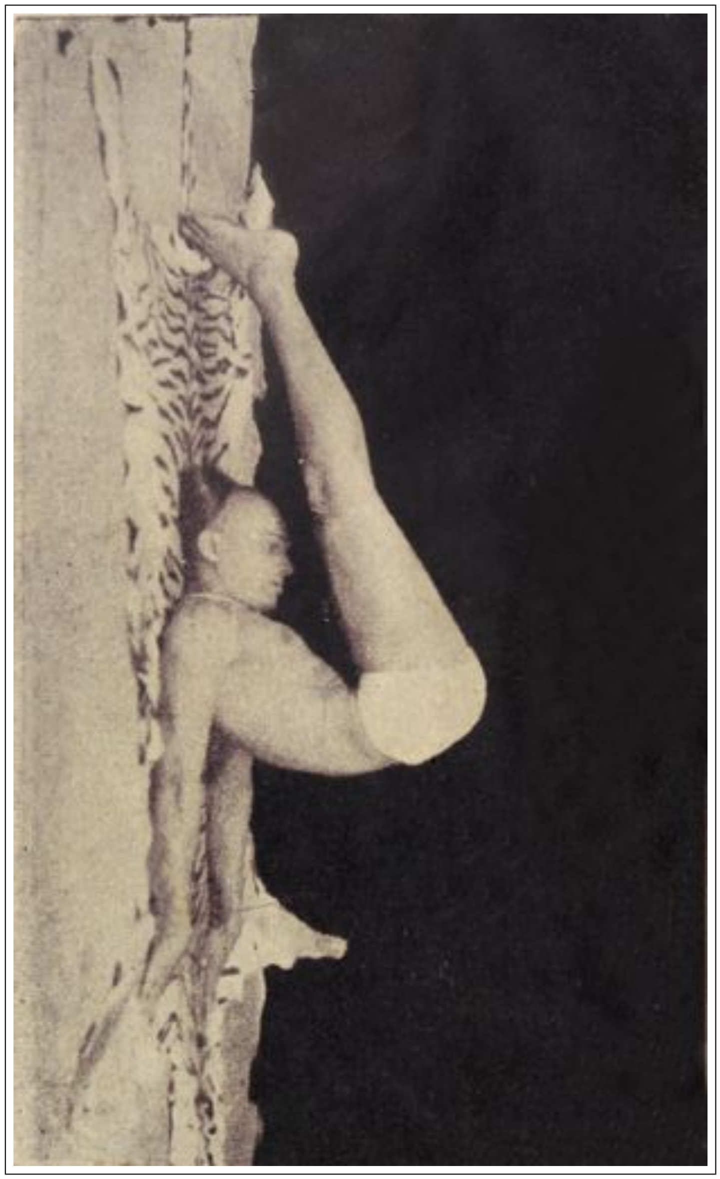


Figure 4.89: Halasana



Figure 4.90: Mayurasana

cannot do this type. So it is alright to just do *sampurna mayurasana*. Study the picture carefully to learn how to place the hands.

This *asana* must be done before eating (on an empty stomach). Wait a minimum of four hours after eating before practising this *asana*. This *asana sthiti* should be held from 1 minute up to 3 hours according to the practitioner's capability. It is good to practise this regularly and to remain in this *sthiti* for longer periods during the winter or colder months rather than in the summer.

If we make it a habit to practise this *asana* every day for at least fifteen minutes, we will attain tremendous benefits. First, it will not allow unnecessary flesh or excessive impurities to remain in our body — it will expel them out. It will increase digestive power. It will protect us from every disease and keep these diseases from approaching. We can say that it is the death of all respiratory diseases, all paralytic diseases — all such dangerous diseases. No disease will approach the people who practise this *asana*.

42 Sarvangasana (Figure 4.91)

This has 12 *vinyasas*. The 8th *vinyasa* is the *asana sthiti*. There are many variations in this *asana*. These can be divided into two main types of variations: *salamba* and *niralamba*.

This *asana* and the next *asana* (*sirsasana*) that will be described must be practised very carefully and with great caution, remembering the earlier warnings. Before practising these *asanas*, we first determine that the body is in good healthy condition. Only then can one begin practising. There might be many problems if one starts practising in a hurry. It is much better that these *asanas* are first learned properly under the guidance of a guru.

While describing these two *asanas*, the yoga *sastras* and experts say that in the same way that the head and the heart are the vital parts of our body, similarly, among all the *asanas*, these two *asanas* are like the head and the heart. It is said with much authority that if these two *asanas* are practised regularly and properly, the practitioner will experience the awakening and rise of *kundalini*. Due to this, they will experience the blessings of isvara and will be swallowed in the sea of eternal bliss. So say the great.

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End of First Part

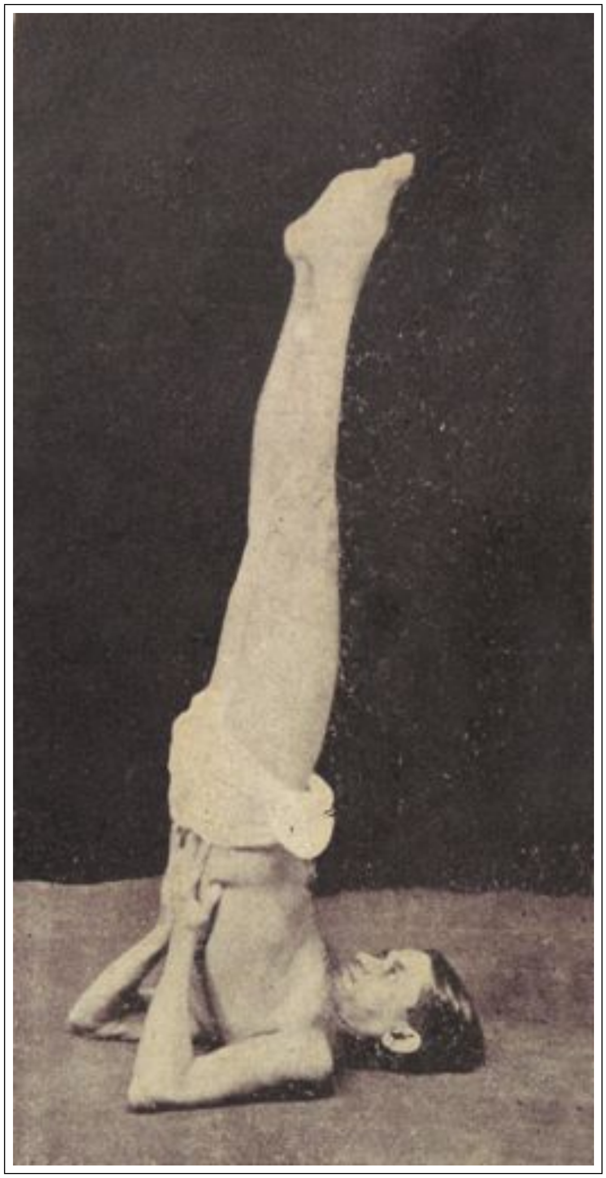


Figure 4.91: Sarvangasana

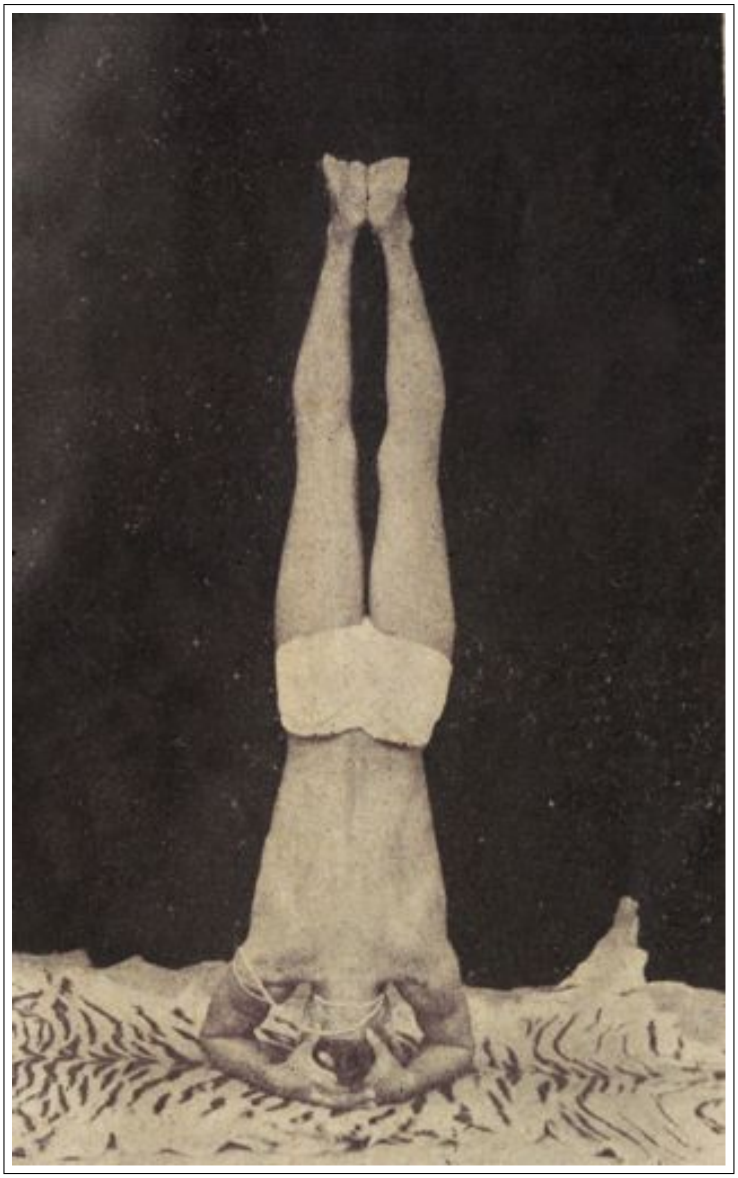


Figure 4.92: Salamba Sirsasana 1.



Figure 4.93: Salamba Sirsasana 2.

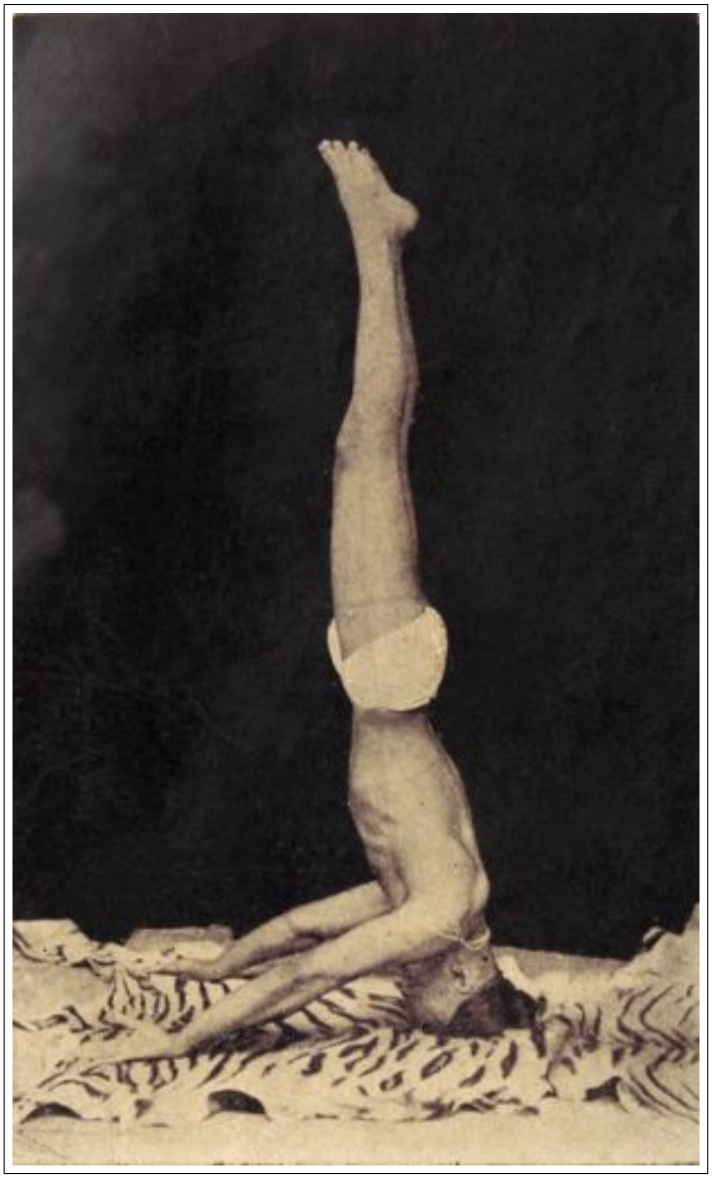


Figure 4.94: Niralamba Sirsasana



Figure 4.95: Mukta Hasta Sirsasana

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Glossary of Terms

abhyasa constant practice or exercise

adhyayanam study, learning, reading (especially of the vedas)

anga part, limb

angula breadth of one finger

atma true self

caitanya good functioning, vitality, sensation

citta mind

dakshina right (side)

divya drishti divine sight; understanding

dosha disturbance or disorder of the three humours of the body

ekagrata one-pointed focus (of the mind)

gñanam knowledge or understanding derived from meditation on higher truth

granthi combination, meeting place

guna quality or attribute

indriyas senses. There are ten — five of expression or action and five of cognition

jadam senseless; insentient; has no cognitive ability

jagrata avastha waking state

jathara agni the digestive fire of the stomach

jivatma individual soul enshrined in a human body

kapha phlegm — one of the three humors of the body

krama proceeding step by step according to a regular order or custom.

kriya activity

kumbhaka retention of breath, either inside or outside the body

mantra sacred hymn or prayer; a sacred text

mozham distance between elbow and tip of finger

mudra symbolic gesture; seal (of a part of the body)

nadi channel, a tubular vessel of the body, conduit

nidra sleep

nyasa the assignment of various parts of the body to various deities through the use of prayer and gesture

paramatma supreme spirit or Brahman

pitta one of the humors of the body, its excess and vitiation

pralaya dissolution, death, destruction (of the world)

prana breath, breath of life, vital air

prapanca universe, manifested world

puraka inhalation of the breath into the body, filling it up

recaka exhalation of the breath

roga disease

sadhana sustained effort leading to accomplishment; means of accomplishment

sakti power, energy, strength

sampurna complete

sanatana dharma ancient eternal path

sancharam movement, travel, passage

sastra scriptural injunction, sacred book

sattvaguna the quality of goodness or purity

shatkriya purificatory processes

siddhi accomplishment; supernatural and marvelous powers (there are 8)

sthiti remaining stationary in a position or state

tamas quality of darkness, inertia, or ignorance

upasana formal meditation

vama left (side)

vata wind — one of the three humors of the body, its excess and vitiation

vayu air; wind; vital air

vidya knowledge; science

vinyasa an arrangement or assemblage (of a sequence of asanas)

vritti movement or activity